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JANUARY MEETING, 1917.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 11th instant, at three o'clock, P. M.; the first VICE-PRESIDENT, Mr. RHODES, in the absence of the PRESIDENT, in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved; and the Librarian reported the list of donors to the Library since the last meeting.

The Cabinet-Keeper reported the following gifts and purchases:

From Rev. Charles L. Hutchins, of Concord, through Mr. Lord, a photograph of John Tucker (1753-1825), first Clerk of the United States Supreme Court, and Junior Clerk and Clerk of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, from the original painting in the Clerk's office in the Capitol at Washington.

From Frank W. Bayley, a photograph of a painting of George III, by Mather Brown, signed and dated 1790, owned in 1916 in Philadelphia.

From the Merchants National Bank of Boston, a calendar showing a half-tone view of Christ Church, Salem Street, Boston, from an etching by Dwight Case Sturgis, 1916.

From Miss Ellen A. Stone, of Lexington, a piece of a beam from the Old Belfry, Lexington, from which the alarm was rung out on the morning of April 19, 1775, given by the widow of Isaac Parker, grandson of Capt. John Parker, commander of the minute-men on that day, to Miss Stone in 1886, when the building was still standing in the rear of the Parker homestead there.

From Daniel B. Updike, a colored view of the First Church at Lancaster, Mass., built in 1816 by Charles Bulfinch.

From Edward J. Cox, and Mrs. Lydia Colburn Wellington, a photograph from a daguerreotype, 1848-50, in the possession of Mr. Cox, of a group of lecturers in Horace Mann's Teachers' Institutes: Dana P. Colburn, great uncle and uncle respectively of the donors, Herman Kruzi, Jr., Arnold Guyot, Samuel S. Greene, Louis Agassiz, Barnas Sears, successor to Horace Mann, William Russell, and George B. Emerson.

From Mr. Norcross, the bronze medal, by Richard E. Brooks,

struck to commemorate American Relief for Belgium, 1915; and one of the new fifty-cent pieces.

From Mrs. Kingsmill Marrs, a photograph of Queen Victoria at her Jubilee.

From Mr. Lodge, a photograph of the U. S. Submarine "K 6" in mid-act of launching at Quincy, Mass., 1914, and one of the Spanish submarine, "Isaac Peral," at her launching there in 1916.

Also a photostat view of the Old Suffolk Bank building, Tremont Street, in 1868, where the Historical Society had its home for many years, and of the Boston Museum, enlarged from a cut in the *Massachusetts Ploughman* of August 24, 1901.

Eleven badges and medals by purchase.

The Corresponding Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from William Keeney Bixby of St. Louis, Missouri, accepting his election as a Corresponding Member of the Society.

The Editor reported the following gifts:

From Mrs. Frederick C. Shattuck, a letter of Frederick Law Olmstead to her father, Col. Henry Lee, dated March 5, 1865, on military education.¹

From Mr. Schouler, in behalf of Mr. James H. Fay, of Brookline, nine letters of William Everett to Mr. Fay, which he desires to be added to the Everett papers. The letters are characteristic and interesting.

From Dr. Warren, a transcript of Dr. John Warren's record of his service in the War for Independence, the original of which is in Dr. Warren's possession.

From Mr. Washburn, a series of letters of the highest historical importance, written to Jasper Mauduit, agent in London for the province of Massachusetts. On them Mr. Washburn made the following statement:

The papers relate to the Agency in London of the province of Massachusetts and concern two of the agents — William Bollan and Jasper Mauduit. Little is known of either man, and the names hardly occur in our standard histories. Bollan was a lawyer, who came to Massachusetts from England in 1740, and became agent of the colony in 1745. Mauduit is referred to in the third volume of Hutchinson's *History*. Bollan was a son-in-law of Governor William Shirley, who was governor of Massachusetts in 1741 and Commander of the British forces in

¹ See p. 168, *infra*.

America in 1755. While Shirley was in power, Bollan exercised much influence in England on the relations between the Province and Great Britain. He proved somewhat remiss in obtaining repayment to Massachusetts of the expenses of the French and Indian War, and Jasper Mauduit, Treasurer of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians in New England, saw his opportunity, pressed the subject on the ministry and secured the grant.

In reward for his efforts, the Province appointed him agent in place of Bollan and associated with him in the agency a brother, Israel Mauduit. This arrangement continued until the War for Independence.

These papers concern the appointment and agency of Jasper Mauduit, being public and private letters sent to him from Massachusetts, dealing with a variety of public questions. The mere recital of the names of the writers will indicate the quality: Andrew Oliver, brother-in-law of Governor Hutchinson, in 1770 Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts, for whose removal the Colony petitioned, eleven pieces; Thomas Hutchinson, royal Governor of Massachusetts; James Otis, three letters; Thomas Cushing, for several years Lieutenant-Governor, fifteen letters; Charles Chauncy, clergyman, three pieces; Andrew Eliot, minister of the New North Church in Boston, who, in 1768, sent to a friend in England an account of the effects of the dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies; Jonathan Mayhew, minister of West Church in Boston, friend of Otis, who, in 1766, preached a sermon advocating a repeal of the stamp act, two letters; Harrison Gray, Treasurer and Receiver General of the Province, maternal grandfather of Harrison Gray Otis, eight papers.

The earlier in date of these papers relate to the army and navy accounts, muster rolls and service of Massachusetts men under Lord Amherst and Admiral Durell, with two of the formal statements of expenditures — for 1759 and 1761. Letters from William Bollan concern these accounts, the much discussed lotteries and "fee act," and describe the proceedings held upon it before the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations; also the even more important "suspending clause" in laws passed by the General Court, on which there is an elaborate argument sent to Bollan for his instructions; and a communication trans-

mitting Bollan's account of the colonial history and policy. The appointment of Mauduit is described in letters from Chauncy, Otis, Mayhew, Oliver, and Cushing, relating to the various manœuvres of friends and opponents in the selection of himself and his brother in the agency, and official letters treat the questions pending between the General Court and the British Ministry and Parliament.

From Miss Annie H. Thwing, the results of many years' labor on the history of landed estates in Boston, from the earliest period. This truly notable accomplishment supplements the Bowditch "Titles" (ms.) now in the Society, giving us exceptional material on the history of Boston property, elaborately indexed. Its plan and scope are described in the following letter from Miss Thwing:

This work was begun many years ago as a pastime, with no thought that it would ever assume its present proportions, or become in any way public. It began with the desire to locate certain individuals, but that was found to be an almost impossible task without tracing back each estate. One lived in Bogg Lane, but no author seems to have heard of such a lane. This led to a study of the streets, and here again no book was found that gave the history of the streets back of 1708 when the streets were named for the first time.

The field has been well covered by many historians, but just the points wanted seemed to be missing, and much duplicate work had been done on others. An author often quotes from another without giving the original authority, thus in some instances perpetuating mistakes, and facts have been stated, the original source of which it would be interesting to know. To give one instance: Shaw in his *History*, page 58, says, "The Indians had a footpath over the highest part of the marsh or flats, which was raised and widened by a Mr. Crabtree to retain the water of the mill pond," the present Causeway St. There may be some ms. where this is stated, but thus far it has not been found.

Therefore, as a personal pleasure, a systematic study of the public records was begun. It was the original intention to put under one roof, so to speak, by a card catalogue, all the items of interest of each inhabitant. The Suffolk Deeds, the Probate Records, Massachusetts Archives in part, and Town Records have been thus copied. The Church Records, the Court Records, and Newspaper files will have to be left for another worker. Could the files at the State House be card catalogued as has been done in Concord, New Hampshire, much valuable information would no doubt be found which it is now im-

possible to sift out, and which would be of great assistance to historians.

As this work was not intended for publication there has been no comparison with the original authorities. That would now be too great a task, but as the authority has been named in every instance, with the date, it is an easy matter for one to look up any point where errors occur, and where accuracy is demanded. The Genealogical part is not complete but room has been left for additions, and it is hoped that those who consult this work will add such items of interest as they may find elsewhere.

The Bowditch Titles, in the possession of the Historical Society, have been of great assistance in confirming the results obtained.

This work consists of:

- (1) A card catalogue of the inhabitants of Boston. There are upwards of one hundred thousand cards.
On each card is noted as far as found: Name of the inhabitant, Occupation, Date of birth and death, Name of parents, Marriage and name of wife's parents, Names of children and dates of birth, Public Offices held, Will, Abstract of deeds of his estate, if a property owner, and Items of interest.
- (2) Twenty-two volumes of extracts of the deeds in the Suffolk Registry arranged according to streets, with the names of the owners in the Book of Possessions, those in the Tax List of 1798, and the Results, i. e. the estates traced as far as possible between these dates. All the transfers are not given in the Results, only such as to show the principal owners of the property. Others may be found in the succeeding sheets or in the card catalogue. There are some missing links, chiefly owing to the lack of knowledge of family connections which as yet have not been fully carried out, or because the deeds have not been recorded before the year 1800. The deeds have not been copied from a legal point of view, as placing the inhabitants, rather than the legality of the transfer, was the purpose.
- (3) A volume of plans recorded among the deeds.
- (4) A volume of mss. and original deeds, many of which were contributed by Miss Minns.
- (5) Two volumes giving the history of each street.
- (6) Two volumes of miscellaneous items, the Town Records in a measure classified, Notes on Churches, Schools, Taverns, etc.
- (7) Eighteen bound volumes of various publications.
- (8) Fourteen drawers in which are placed maps and photographs. The maps are of intrinsic value only as showing the growth of the Town. The photographs are from old prints, or taken directly by amateurs or professionals.

Two years ago Miss Susan Minns became interested and kindly offered to provide assistants to copy the wills and deeds, and a type-

writer. It is to her that the public are indebted for the completion of the work at this time. Otherwise it would have taken some years to cover the ground.

Miss Alice E. Gould has done the greater part of the copying, and Miss Esther W. Lofgren all of the typewriting, besides helping in tracing back the estates.

Miss Minns also gave the oak case.

This work is now presented to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and if it will be a help to future earnest students of the history of the Old Town of Boston, and will help clear up some points as to the early history, I shall be content.

ANNIE H. THWING.

December, 1916.

The VICE-PRESIDENT announced the death of our fellow-member, Hon. George Sheldon, of Deerfield. Professor Hart spoke of Mr. Sheldon and his work, but reserves his remarks for the memoir.

Dean HODGES read a paper on

THE KAPPA DELTA OF CAMBRIDGE. 1804-1819.

At the December meeting the Society received as a gift from Mrs. Thomas Russell Sullivan a manuscript book containing the original minutes of an association of divinity students in Harvard University a hundred years ago. This fraternity, of which Mr. Sullivan's father had been a member, was called the Kappa Delta of Cambridge. The initials stood for Kerukon Didaskaleion, i.e., the School of Preachers. The record of proceedings begins in November, 1804, with a statement of the purpose of the Society. "As many advantages result from well-regulated associations, which cannot be derived from private study; we, the undersigned, having in view the work of the Gospel ministry, hereby form ourselves into a society for the purpose of mutual improvement in theological pursuits."

At that time the method of preparation for the ministry was that of private study. It is true that Harvard College had been founded for the education of ministers: "dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust." In pursuance of that inten-

tion, undergraduates were instructed in Hebrew; there was a commencement oration in that language as late as 1817. Indeed, Jared Sparks, who entered the college in 1811, had already studied Hebrew at Phillips Academy in Exeter. But Sidney Willard, the first president of the Kappa Delta, when, a few years later, he became Hancock Professor of Hebrew, says that his classes were very small; "a dispensation from studying being granted to such as preferred a written request from their parents."¹ The elective system in Harvard College had its rudimentary beginning in the election or non-election of Hebrew.

In further fulfilment of the original purpose of the college, instruction was given to undergraduates by the Hollis Professor of Divinity. But Professor Wigglesworth, who had "from time to time held a catechetical exercise on a lecture previously delivered by him upon some topic of positive or controversial divinity, which the Senior and Junior classes, as well as the resident graduates, were required to attend, found the catechizing and remarks so wearisome to the undergraduates that, with the consent of the college, he substituted for it portions of Doddridge's, *Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics and Divinity*, to be studied; in which the pupils were accordingly examined at stated times." And Professor Tappan, who succeeded him, gave a public lecture once a week, in which, says Willard, "he had a just estimation of his auditory, especially of the larger and younger part, and therefore never gave us cause to complain of the length of his discourses."

Graduating from the college with no more divinity than was thus imparted, the young man who intended to enter the ministry sought the parsonage of some learned and experienced pastor; or else, for the sake of the advantage of the library and of the company of his fellows, he stayed on in Cambridge as a resident graduate and studied by himself. He read Butler's *Analogy*, and Paley's *Evidences*, and Abernethy's *Discourses on the Being and Perfection of God*, and Leland's *Advantages of the Christian Revelation*, and Mosheim's *History of the Church*.

Under these casual conditions, no instruction being provided in the practice of preaching, eight young men as charter

¹ See *Proceedings*, XLIV. 534.

members of this fraternity, and some eighty others who came in during the ensuing fifteen years, endeavored to supply the deficiency by maintaining a homiletical department of their own. They formed an association for the purpose of hearing one another preach.

Dr. Abiel Holmes, the minister of the parish, was interested in the undertaking, and the minutes contain several references to his presence at the meetings. Dr. Kirkland, who became president of the college in 1810, used to come in to hear the young men's sermons. "Gentlemen in the study of theology" were eligible to honorary membership. The same privilege was extended to the Governing Boards; and at one time when the tides of interest were running low, "the secretary notified the government to attend, and they promising, the drooping spirits began to return." The society was mainly composed, however, of young men between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, who were preparing for the ministry; though not all of them entered the ministry, or, if they entered, continued in it. John Farrar became a teacher of Greek and Mathematics in the college, Ashur Ware became a District Judge in Maine, Samuel A. Eliot — father of President Eliot — became the college treasurer. The society gave three presidents to Harvard — Edward Everett, Jared Sparks, and James Walker. Everett and Walker, as secretaries, contributed many pages to these minutes. Other notable names in the list of members are Andrews Norton, Henry Ware, Jr., Nathaniel L. Frothingham, Francis W. P. Greenwood, John G. Palfrey, and Samuel J. May.

The weekly meetings were commenced with prayer, followed by a reading of Scripture. A suitable psalm or hymn was then read — "and sung if the society thinks it expedient." After that, there was delivered a discourse upon a passage of Scripture. The brethren then commented upon the prayer and the sermon; being required, however, in their observations on the prayer, to confine themselves to its faults. Thus, on one occasion, they debated how far it was wise to go in confessing, in the process of prayer, the sins of the congregation in detail. Again, "they discussed the question (in remarking upon the prayer) whether it be proper to introduce peculiar and disputed doctrines *in precise and definite language* into

prayer, when the same might be expressed in terms to which all present would agree." After the criticism of these exercises, or "performances," as the secretaries called them, any member might "communicate by writing or otherwise such important observations as have been suggested to him by reading and reflection, and propose for solution any difficult passage of Scripture." It was once voted that "in addition to the present services, each member in his turn be required to perform an extemporaneous exercise"; after a year's trial the extemporaneous exercise was abolished. But the reading of a dissertation was added to the order.

The monotonous routine of the minutes is enlivened at one point by the remarks of Secretary Henry Ware on the progress of a proposal to introduce into the meetings an exposition of a passage of Scripture.

When the committee which was appointed to consider this matter reported, [says the Secretary], a long and animated debate ensued. In order to expedite matters, the report was divided into three parts, and the question upon each taken separately: (1) Shall there be such an exercise? Decided, after much discussion, in the affirmative. (2) What shall it be? After much difficulty, the following mode was agreed upon — a passage of Scripture shall be read by one of the members, as long or as short as he pleases, accompanied by observations to explain, or illustrate, or enforce; the method of doing it, and the kind and number of remarks shall be left entirely to himself. (3) Who shall do it? The committee had recommended the performer of the other exercises. This was strongly objected to, and the person who performed the previous week was fixt upon. A new difficulty then arose with respect to the time at which it should be performed. That it should take the place of the usual reading of the Scriptures was proposed, but objected to. Moved, that it be the last performance of the evening, — negatived. Moved, that it be the first, — negatived. The society having thus refused to give it any place, a motion was made for having it on a separate evening. But the session having been protracted to a very late hour, and the members being weary and confused, it was superseded by a motion to adjourn, which was accordingly done.

At another meeting, however, the society voted that the new exercise should be done "at the usual time of reading the Scriptures." But a week later,

those members who had opposed the introduction of the new exercise lest it should be a burden greater than they could bear, came forward and moved a reconsideration of the whole business. The discussion of the question was warm but short — for the advocates of the measure were convinced that it would do no good to force the means of improvement on those who were averse to using them. And they saw too that the majority were more influenced by desire of present ease and fear of present labor than by any very high sense of duty, or ambition of becoming eminent among the teachers of God's word. The former votes, however, were not entirely done away in form, though they will be so in effect. They were modified to read thus — that the members may, *if they please*, accompany the portion of Scripture which they read with remarks, and illustrations as before described.

The place of meeting was also a fertile subject of discussion. During the first five years the society met at Deacon Walton's, but in 1808 "Brother Torrey proposed that we should in future meet in his room at the Widow Treat's, the society being dissatisfied with Deacon Walton's bill for the present term." For a time thereafter they met in each other's rooms or houses. In 1816, the next month after the great debate on the reading of Scripture with comment, "a vote was passed, after full discussion, to reject a motion which had been made to hold our meetings in the Chapel of the University. On the following day, at the written request of three members according to law, a special meeting of the society was called by the president for the purpose of reconsidering the vote passed at the last meeting." This was done, and the society met in the chapel, except in the winter. As the cold days came on, they retreated to the lecture room, number eight, in University Hall. It was voted "that during this winter each member shall open the room and prepare a fire for the society at the meeting next after the one at which he performed." But in February "the secretary was directed to agree with Mr. Hunt to make the fire." It was voted at the same meeting that "in future during the performance, the members of the society shall place themselves in the seats opposite to the preacher." They finally abandoned the chapel altogether. "It had been erroneously supposed by some," says Secretary Greenwood, "and obstinately supported by others, that the

performer, finding himself in the Chapel pulpit, could display more of the orator and preach much better than in a tutor's desk. But the fact was that he did not preach half so well, feeling in such a spacious hall, with such a slim audience, as solitary and depressed as a lonely grasshopper upon a wide common."

The early sermons of the society, so far as their themes and texts represent them, had little reference to the controversy which was in vigorous progress at that time between the Liberals and the Orthodox in the Congregational churches. In 1806 they were, indeed, disputing, but without coming to any decision ("as usual," says the secretary) whether a man can truly love his neighbor unless he loves God. And in the same year they had "some animated conversation" on the question "whether reason has a right to judge and decide upon matters of revelation." But in 1808 they were still so secluded from the surrounding theological storm that "a long discourse took place concerning the use of the subjunctive mode, which terminated without decision."

In April, 1809, however, Brother Abbot read a disquisition on the lawfulness of worshipping Christ; and Brother Allen dealt with the same theme at the next meeting, the discussion being prolonged, the secretary says, "beyond our usual time for retiring." The hour of beginning the meeting was seven-and-a-third o'clock, and punctuality was secured by fining every tardy member twelve-and-a-half cents. In June, Brother Thacher questioned how far a diversity of opinion is consistent with a state of salvation.

By this time the department of homiletics had become a department of theology. Brother Sewall maintained that it was right to worship Christ; Brother Thacher read a dissertation to show that such worship is contrary to the Scriptures: "a very ingenious and candid performance this," says the appreciative Secretary, "as well as elegantly written." Brother Sanger delivered a sermon from the text, "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." "After much freedom of remark, and some debate, adjourned. Brother Sanger made the concluding prayer." Brother Gannett turned the current of discussion for a moment by proving the eternity of future punishment. But Brother Everett took up

the prevailing theme again by "attempting," says the secretary, "to prove that there is no authority in Scripture for the Nicene doctrine that Christ is peculiarly the Son of God." Brother English objected, in a dissertation, to the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity. Brother Abbot considered again the doctrine of the future state; but in the remarks which were made at length upon his sermon, "it was objected that his representation of feeling and sentiment upon the subject of a future life, and his accounts of the influence of the belief in it upon the mind, were too highly wrought and poetical."

The founding of a theological seminary, in 1808, at Andover, took away from the company of resident graduates in Cambridge such as were of the Orthodox party in the general contention, but there was left in the society a sufficient difference between conservative and radical minds to provide material for debate.

An animated discussion took place concerning the degree of evidence with which the Christian revelation is offered to us, occasioned by the preacher using the word 'probability' when speaking of its truth, which all agreed would be wrong to use before a common audience, though some contended that the evidence we have does not produce moral certainty. The subject was talked about until we got perfectly confused and lost in a wilderness of contradictory positions, assertions and illustrations, when it was thought advisable to adjourn.

The minutes show that theology continued to be the prevailing interest of the society for several years. The dissertations were more important than the sermons. This period may conveniently be bounded on the one side by the fourth anniversary, November, 1808, when Brother Nichols "showed the importance of theological knowledge to a clergyman, and the necessity of diligence in acquiring it, and of a hearty pious zeal in unfolding it to his people"; and on the other side by the eighth anniversary, November, 1812, when Brother Charles Eliot preached a sermon "in which some errors on the subjects of the character of God, the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the communicating of instruction from the pulpit were ingeniously, eloquently and seriously pointed out." For a time the dissertation, by vote of the society, was omitted, and

when it was restored some difficulty was found in getting members to prepare it. The sermons were concerned with practical religion: forgiveness of injuries, thanksgiving, the Spirit of Christ, Christian improvement, self-examination. Brother Samuel A. Eliot preached on the text, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

With the passing of the years, and the consequent change in the membership of the society, the initial enthusiasm began to wane. In 1812, "the few brothers present deeply regretted that so many had neglected the assembling of themselves together; but it was presumed that the absent members were necessarily detained." This charitable presumption was not extended so far, however, as to cover Brother Folsom's absence from a subsequent meeting. "Brother Folsom, who should have preformed, did not make his appearance; as this was the thirteenth evening since his first appointment to this service, therefore voted unanimously that he be forever after excused from all future trouble on its account." Secretary Edward Everett, in 1813, apologizes for the omission of the minutes of many meetings by saying that "the small number of the members during the last term rendered it a labor without profit to make a record of the meetings." He adds, however, that "at the opening of the present term the numbers of the society were increased."

Interest in the meetings was still so active in November, 1816, that a subscription paper was carried around to the several members "to ascertain the opinion of the society upon the propriety of having two meetings a week instead of one. A great majority was found in favor of that alteration, and it was therefore ordered that this society convene every Tuesday and Friday." At the next meeting — after a sermon on the reverence due to the Sacred Scriptures, which was followed, says Secretary James Walker, by "a very spirited debate in which much was said to very little purpose — it was moved to reconsider the vote passed at the last meeting requiring the society to meet twice a week; and, to the astonishment and confusion of the steady friends of that law, it was reconsidered and exploded by an overwhelming majority."

"In the course of the conversation which followed Brother Greenwood's sermon (Dec. 16, 1816), the society signified

their decided approbation of a solemn, impressive style of preaching, and expressed a desire that no grounds of complaint might any longer exist in the candidates of this place on the score of coldness in the performance of religious services." "After Brother Brook's sermon (May 12, 1815) many opinions were discussed respecting emphasis in prayer. Something of the monotone which approaches but does not reach a tone was supposed best by Bro. Rev. H. Ware of Boston, who favored us with his company and remarks. So in reading the Scriptures, the same impressiveness of calm effort is highly preferable to deep studied emphasis." At another meeting, "After many wise remarks, nothing to the purpose, how 'doeth' should be pronounced, the society voted that no brother should be allowed in future to read a prayer." And again, later, "a few remarks on the worn-out subject of pronunciation, and on the propriety of gesture with the left hand closed the meeting." "Brother Eliot gave a very judicious sermon on the characteristic discoveries of Christianity. Some remarks were made upon the great importance of divisions in sermons. They were regarded as eminences from which the surrounding country could be viewed." On another occasion, "after the sermon the members of the society conversed nearly an hour upon the propriety of a preacher's quoting poetry." Again, the secretary says, "the sermon was instructive, and the debate, though very little concerned with the sermon, which the brothers entirely overlooked in their zeal to discuss matters and things in general, was nevertheless amusing, and not wholly destitute of profit to the silent auditors."

The records make no mention of any political discussion in the meetings. It was voted, however, in 1816, "that all business of a secular nature, i.e., which may not be regularly expected to come before the society, shall be transacted at other meetings than those which are held for devotional purposes. The reason of the regulation is that our feelings may not be improperly exercised or our minds unnecessarily occupied on subjects averse to religious sentiments." The only political note in the book is a postscript added by Edward Everett to the minutes for March 3, 1813. "Gov. Gerry gives a dinner tomorrow in honour of his being chosen Vice-President of the U. S. A. 'Culprits hang, that Presidents may dine.'"

In March, 1819, the secretary, Charles Brooks, records in the minutes that "the regular meetings of the society have been prorogued for the last two weeks as the regular performer was neither prepared, nor able to procure a substitute, and for the same reason there was no preaching this evening." In May, "the secretary being absent, nothing but the key could be found, no candles, no tinder-box, no charity or patience." In September, "Brother Fessenden again disappointed us, and we agreed that he should dissolve his connection with a society which so little interested him. Thus," adds the secretary, "commenced a series of difficulties, delinquencies and misunderstandings which shook to its base the K. D." He is not, however, in despair. The "government," being appealed to, begin to attend the meetings. Indeed, the last word of the last minute is an expression of good hope. The society "has had burdens which are happily taken from it."

How far these anticipations were fulfilled, this book of records does not show. There remained but one blank page, and this the secretary occupied with an affectionate apostrophe to the book itself:

Venerable record! Fifteen years hast thou noticed the young efforts of those who have been here, but who on leaving have forgotten thee, the only footsteps that many have left. If difficulties have threatened, you faithfully tell their origin and influence, and may succeeding disciples take lessons from your experience. It has been your lot to accompany a band of brothers through a toilsome pilgrimage; and though you have been partaker only of their best enjoyments and happiest moments, you have too often found the one alloyed, the other short. . . . And now farewell! As I have last presided in your meetings, I now, by authority vested in me, adjourn you *sine die*.

Mr. THAYER, first Vice-President of the American Historical Association, spoke on the annual meeting of that association at Cincinnati, in December, 1916.

Mr. RHODES read a chapter from a forthcoming volume on the Civil War.

Dr. SHATTUCK communicated a series of letters from Timothy Dix and his son, John Adams Dix, written to Dr. George Cheyne Shattuck. The letters indicate the close relations ex-

isting between the families, and describe a period of Dix's career lightly passed over in the biography by Dr. Morgan Dix.

FROM TIMOTHY DIX, JR.¹

RENDEZVOUS, CONCORD, June 29th, 1812.

DEAR SIR,— It is with considerable reluctance I assure you that we so soon part with Adams.² Mrs. Dix³ and two of his sisters are very desirous of acquiring some knowledge of the French language, and fear they shall not again have so good an opportunity. I wish Adams to pay some attention to arithmetic and elocution, and as much attention as possible to the Spanish language. I wish by all means that he may have as much knowledge of that as he has of the French; I wish you to procure such articles of clothing, books, etc., as he may need and I will settle the bills on sight, he will not need much clothing for several months except shoes and handkerchiefs. I should be very unwilling that he should spend any time with the boys in the streets or commons, however I need not dictate [to] you relative to his treatment, but cheerfully submit all to your superior judgment. May he not have one or two pupils in the French language out of your family, so as to earn enough to meet all his bills? I believe there can be no objection but his want of years. So far as I have been able to determine I think he has a grammatical knowledge of the language. Should I be called into the service of my country (as I expect soon to be) it will be necessary that I make the most prudent distribution possible of my small funds for supporting my

¹ (—1813), at one time a storekeeper at Boscawen, N. H. His grandfather, Jonathan (1710-1804), had married Sarah, daughter of Rev. Benjamin Shattuck, of Littleton, Mass.

² Young Dix had entered the family of Dr. Shattuck in June, 1812. The father was then in Baltimore, recruiting, having been transferred from a New Hampshire regiment to a corps to be raised in Maryland. Of this period General Dix writes in his Autobiography: "On my return from Montreal I was sent to Boston, and placed in the family of Dr. George Cheyne Shattuck, a distant relative of the family, and one of the most eminent physicians of that city. . . . He spared time from an extensive practice to hear my recitations in Latin, and he engaged several personal friends to give me instruction in other studies. Nathan Hale, editor of the *Boston Advertiser*, gave me lessons in mathematics; Señor Sales, afterwards Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University, in Spanish; and Captain Morse, of the new levies, a tragedian of some note at that period, who had just received his commission, and was recruiting his company, in elocution. . . . The six months which I passed under the direction of these accomplished gentlemen, were months of unceasing labor, and the habits of application which I acquired were of infinite service to me in after life." Dix, *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, I. 41.

³ She was a second wife, Lucy Hartwell, of Littleton, Mass.

numerous family. If I should not see you soon I wish you to write me; Mrs. Dix joins me in compliments to yourself and Lady. Am Dear Sir, with sentiments of respect and esteem, Your friend,

TIMOTHY DIX, JR.

BALTIMORE, Oct. 3rd, 1812.

SIR, — Enclosed you have a twenty dollar bill for the purpose of settling Adams' bills and a letter to him. I wish him to commence the study of the Spanish language as soon as will be profitable for him; I think it will hardly be profitable to attend six months to the study of mathematics at this time; it may be well for him to attend to it a few weeks longer and in the mean time if Mr. Morse¹ or any other good man can give him some instruction in elocution, I should be pleased.

Please present my respects to Mrs. Davis,² and compliments to Mrs. Shattuck and Miss Williams. Am with due respect, Sir, your friend,

TIMOTHY DIX, JR.³

P. S. I wish Adams to look at his latin books occasionally, and beg you to hear him recite if you have leisure. T. D.

BALTIMORE, Dec'r 14, 1812.

DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 11th ult. was received the 20th. I note with satisfaction your distribution of the twenty dollars and now enclose you for similar purposes. Am pleased with your arrangement of Adams' studies. My only fears are that he does not devote so much time as he ought to instructing the ladies in French. I regretted much (on his account) that "Mrs. S[hattuck] . . . could not probably with convenience avail herself of his instructions

¹ Ebenezer B. Morse, On applying for information to Mr. Robert Gould Shaw, gatherer of the great collection on actors and the drama, he gave an extract from Wemyss' *Chronology of the American Stage*, as follows: "Mr. Morse. Actor, Lawyer, Soldier, Sailor and Clergyman, truly 'a man of many parts,' born in Massachusetts; made his first appearance on the stage, November 28, 1806, at the Park Theatre, New York, as Pierre in 'Venice Preserved' under the management of T. Cooper; was the first actor, an American by birth, who played in London, England, with deserved success; retired from the stage, entered the army, became chaplain in the navy, and died an ordained Minister of the Gospel at Williamsburg, Virginia." He held the rank of captain in the 3d Artillery, commissioned July 6, 1812, and was honorably discharged June 1, 1814. He died April 14, 1840.

² Mrs. Caleb Davis.

³ Major, 14th Regiment U. S. Infantry.

longer than 'till the first of January" but the consideration that she will be more *pleasantly employed*, and having the same terms offered him here for any time he may be able to attend; and he having also received a little appointment and being subjected to my order, I shall with less reluctance remove him at the time you propose. I am under very great obligation to you, my Dear Sir, for your kindness and attention to him; and indulge a hope that his conduct has not been such as to entirely forbid him your future patronage. I am not much pleased with his engaging in the Army and do not intend he shall remain in it more than a year or two should he live and the war continue, and that time if I live he will spend with or near me;¹ I have just received orders to go to Annapolis and take command of the two Forts at that place. It is a place of little business but much wealth and refined society; I understand there is a good public school. Adams may I think spend his time there or here to advantage. My new orders will prevent me from visiting New England as soon as I contemplated, shall however in the course of the winter while the Chesapeake is frozen and the Forts free from any danger of assault. Should there be any ballance in your hands after settling Adams' bills, you will please hand it to him on his departure. Have the goodness Dear Sir, to present my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Shattuck and family. Am with much respect and esteem, your friend,

TIMOTHY DIX, JR.

FROM JOHN ADAMS DIX.

FORT WASHINGTON,² 15th Nov., 1818.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have permitted a much longer time to elapse without addressing you than I had designed, but I have been controlled by a wish of communicating some intelligence of an interesting character in relation to my situation and prospects; yet after waiting in vain a change or an intermission of the dull monotony of duty and employment, which has characterised my abode here, I find myself constrained to relinquish all expectation of an immediate revolution in my habits of life.

Two months have passed since my arrival and six weeks of this period were engrossed by official duties of a general character, and by a system of labor which afforded me very assiduous occupation,

¹ Dix received an appointment of cadet in the service of the United States in a letter from the War Department dated December 11, and was directed to report to his father and receive his orders. The son served as clerk to the father.

² On the Potomac, "opposite Mount Vernon," where a fortification was being constructed. He had attained the rank of First Lieutenant.

in restoring to order the affairs of a company, which a protracted term of neglect had reduced to an almost irremediable state of confusion and embarrassment. I have however found sufficient leisure to read Horace, and am now left more at liberty to pursue my studies. The only Latin works I have now (unperused) are Caesar's *Commentaries* and Cicero *de Amicitia, de Senectute, et de Officiis*, which I purchased a few days since. Tacitus and Livy I cannot obtain. Did you wish me to read the complete works of these authors? With the presumption that you did, I have made arrangements to send to Philadelphia for them, but I shall await a reply from you. The complete works of the former I can procure for about twenty dollars.

I made my debut at the Capital four days ago, and delivered the letter of introduction to Gen'l Parker,¹ which I shewed you. Dr. Lovell² I could not find. The Adjutant and Inspector General treated me very courteously, took me home to dine with him, and gave me a general invitation to his house; and to these bounds I must expect his attentions to be circumscribed. To indulge the hope that my acquaintance may be instrumental in obtaining me thro' his agency a more desirable station or office in the Army than the one I now occupy, I feel would be courting disappointment. I have no influential friends whose favor he would conciliate by becoming the author of my advancement, and nature has unfortunately refused me the faculty of administering complimentary speeches, which is in military life much more successful than merit in urging its possessor to an elevated grade of preferment. Gen'l's Swift³ and Jessup⁴ are absent from the City — otherwise I should have been presented to them by Gen'l P.

The most unpleasant and unfavorable circumstance of my station here is the restriction imposed on the officers by the Comg. Officer of the Department. We are interdicted the privilege of absence from our Garrison more than twenty-four hours, and it is impossible to visit Washington and return the same day. Therefore, whenever we wish to attend a levee or a debate in Congress, we are under the necessity of addressing the Commandant of Department for permission with the hazard of receiving it when it is too late to avail ourselves of it.

Since so many obstructions preclude my approach even to the avenues of promotion I must abandon the hope of immediate advancement and confide in the ultimate success of my own unassisted

¹ Daniel Parker, Inspector General.

² Joseph Lovell (1788-1836), Surgeon General.

³ Joseph Gardner Swift (1783-1865).

⁴ Thomas Sidney Jesup (1788-1860).

and persevering exertions; and I shall certainly not despair as long as my health permits me to pursue those objects, which I have in view.

For those attentions and favors which your goodness has lavished upon me, I am conscious of obligations, which I can never repay. I have received them in silence, because I have felt myself incompetent to express those feelings of gratitude, to which your unprecedented kindness has given existence; but I have ever cherished and shall continue to preserve a vivid sense of obligation, which the attrition of time can never obliterate.

My health has experienced many fluctuations and as usual, at the approach of winter, begins to decline. We have at our Garrison a very intelligent physician, who has recommended to me the use of the Nitric Acid, preparatory to which I am to take two or three doses of Calomel — this I shall commence tomorrow. I should have consulted Dr. Lovell, but I could not find him when I was last in Washington, and I shall not visit the City again for some weeks.

I met Colo. Towson¹ a few days since, and was the subject of some polite attentions from him, for which I am sensible that I am indebted to your favorable representations in relation to me.

I shall await with great anxiety a letter from you, with which I beg you soon to favor me, and when I next address you it shall be on more interesting topics.

Will you have the goodness to remember me respectfully to your family and Mrs. Bradlee? Believe me, Sir, with great respect and esteem, Your friend and very obedient Servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

BROWNSVILLE,² 14th April, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR, — I addressed you from New York and have been impatiently awaiting your reply. It is a long time since I have heard from you — the first of January was the date of your last letter.

My last letter contained some intelligence in reference to the situation I now occupy, tho' the subject was merged in doubt. I well know the benevolent interest you feel in my welfare, and I intended on the reception of my appointment to have apprized you of my success; but Gen'l Brown³ expressed a wish that I should immediately join him, and I was so overwhelmed with employments in transferring the direction of the Department with which I was entrusted to another officer that I had no time to address you.

¹ Nathan Towson (1784-1854).

² Jefferson County, New York.

³ Jacob Brown (1775-1828).

I find myself very agreeably situated here, unmolested with the requisitions of courtesy, not compelled to receive or reciprocate attentions, and enjoying extensive advantages for study and mental cultivation. My attention must for a time be necessarily bent on acquisitions, not contemplated by the course of literary pursuits, which I adopted in conformity to your suggestion and counsel, yet these attainments will have an equally favorable influence on my future advantage. Thus, I am rendering myself perfect in the French language, which I have neglected latterly, for which purpose I have engaged in the translation of a French historical work, which will employ two months.

The last of May, the General designs to make the tour of the North-Western Lakes, an expedition which will absorb at least three months. This I cannot consider disadvantageous, as I can amass information of a beneficial character in relation to an important section of our country. Geographical information is more certain and assuredly more interesting when yielded by personal observation.

I am still solicitously interested in the attainment of the honorary degree which you encourage me to expect. Be assured that all my leisure shall be devoted to the prosecution of the requisite studies.

I am pleased with Gen'l Brown and think I can *please him*. My prospects are certainly flattering — but the path of military pursuits abounds with difficulties and perils; to surmount or evade them requires the most rigid and unreposing circumspection. Military ambition appears to me to be of the most arbitrary and unfeeling character; it subjugates and impresses into its service every sensibility of the heart; it annihilates our tenderest sympathies and prostrates every insurrection of friendship and philanthropy.

The ardor of competition, the chagrin of disconcerted rivalry, the more vulgar — in fact the universal criticism of envy — constitute and organize a system of scrutiny and inquisition into the conduct of an officer, which his most vigilant and cautious adherence to rectitude is alone able to repel. If his habits ever receive the aspersion of impropriety, he becomes the object of proscription and abandonment which ultimately effect his official destruction. I address you, as you wished, with perfect frankness; but these are sentiments I have never before expressed tho' I have long felt the consciousness that they were correct.

I beg you to write me on reception of this. I have calculated much on your advice, with which I have not yet been favored. Will you remember me cordially to your family and believe me, With the greatest regard, very sincerely yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

(*Confidential.*)

BROWNSVILLE, 20th April, 1820.

MY DEAR SIR, —

I was detained in Washington much longer than I expected, in consequence of Gen'l Brown's engagements. In the month of February I went with him into the interior of Virginia to visit the two ex-Presidents Jefferson and Madison.¹ The latter we found in fine health and in as fine spirits — he could not, indeed, well be otherwise, for everything around him combined to render him healthful and happy. He occupies himself sufficiently for the purposes of exercise with the superintendence of the agricultural labors of his Slaves on his plantation, and with the more immediate direction of his garden, which is the finest we saw in Virginia. He is a very excellent practical farmer and horticulturist. I was very much surprised at his amenity and complaisance of manner, as I had always understood that he was singularly distant and frigid. It is impossible that any one could be more courteous and communicative in conversation. When he was in office he had undoubtedly more of stateliness and dignity, but with the resignation of his official honors, he has lost all the formality, with which he supported them. Mr. Jefferson's manners are very similar, tho' they have more of simplicity and less of grace. His health has for some time been very much disordered, but he maintains his spirits and activity of mind. His conversation occasionally indicates some decay of intellect, which must be expected in his great weight of years and in the derangement of his animal constitution, which is cooperating for the depression of his mind. He talks much of the old war and the *Continental Congress*, and abuses to excess the sovereigns of Europe, who had dominion in the days of his public course. There was nothing in Mr. Madison's conversation, which betrayed any decadence of his mental faculties — every thing indicated the greatest soundness and vigor. Mr. Jefferson's estate is in wretched condition. His plantation appears to be very much neglected, and his house is in a wonderful state of dilapidation. I presume he does not give these subjects the least attention — books and the labor of writing absorb him — and I must not omit to inform you that I observed in his Library a very large manuscript, in his hand writing, which I doubt not will in a few years appear before the world, as a posthumous work of Tom Jefferson. I hinted this to a beautiful and very accomplished Grand-daughter of his, who was at my side, and I thought she looked *very wise and sagacious* on the subject. In re-

¹ See Dix, *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, I. 58.

turning to the City of Washington, that world of forms and ceremonies, I could not but send back my regards in veneration to the picture of greatness and simplicity, which I had left behind me. Nothing in the course of my life and observations has so elevated and so effectually corrected my ideas of true greatness.

The State of Virginia is in her wane. You would be astonished at the decay, which is visible between Washington and Monticello — nothing appears thriving. The land is apparently exhausted, the system of agriculture miserable, every house old and hastening to decay — and yet Mr. Barbour observed (and Mr. Jefferson confirmed his observation) that this section is the *cream* of Virginia. In her department of intellect, there is as serious a decline. Monroe is her last President for years, for she has not a single young man advancing, who can aspire to high political eminence. Crawford¹ is unfortunately a native of Virginia, altho' he left it in extreme youth, and inasmuch as he was born there I hope he may never attain to the Presidency. Virginia is so extravagantly arrogant, and her arrogance is so much more elevated than is justified by the basis, on which she builds the structure, that I am desirous she should have no reason for its increase. It is humiliating that the North, which possesses the ascendancy in physical resource and power, and, in my opinion, a greater amount of talent than the South, should wield less political influence. The superiority of the South is contained in their better political organisation, and in their strict union by the single interest of Slavery. But I hope we may have no more Southern Presidents, except Mr. Calhoun, who, as he is an uncommonly great man and very national in his sentiments, may, I hope, attain the Chief Magistracy.

It is with great satisfaction I feel myself able to communicate to you a favorable change in my health and, I have no doubt, a permanently favorable one. At all events it has occurred at the most propitious epoch of my life, when my constitution is attaining to maturity and my bodily powers are capable of their greatest efforts against disease. Now that the fever of youth is over and my romantic sentiments of love are corrected, I hope to persevere without interruption in the course of ambition which you have marked out for my pursuit. You need have no apprehension that I shall again fall headlong into love. My reason is hereafter to mingle somewhat of her influence in my decisions on this, as I hope on other subjects. Among my highest sources of satisfaction is the hope of being countenanced in my future course by your friendship. I hope to see you in the course of the summer or autumn at Boston. In two weeks

¹ William Harris Crawford (1772-1834), now of Georgia.

I go to West Point, whence I shall address you. In the meantime I trust I shall hear from you there. With my best respects to your family, I remain, my dear Sir, with the highest respect and esteem, your friend and very obedient Servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON, 20th Nov., 1822.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received your favor yesterday and acknowledge with compunction the delinquency, of which it accuses me. You will, however, pardon me when I assure you that my time has been assiduously devoted, since I last wrote you from Philadelphia, to my studies. I have read some history, Reid's *Essays*, Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Say's *Politico-economick* treatise, a few pages of Latin every day, a portion of Hume's *Essays*, run over Ossian, Milton, Goldsmith and a part of Shakespeare, and besides have written some criticisms on subjects of public concern. You will doubtless consider this course as very desultory, but it has not been unimproving. I think I can feel my mind grow stronger and my views expand as I progress, and, if heaven will but give me health, I am confident that I shall realize at some future day my ambitious hopes. At all events, exertion shall not be spared. To your opinion I feel that I owe every thing. It has sustained my resolution and animated my efforts, when every thing else was calculated to depress the one and embarrass the other; and if ever I attain my objects in life, I shall more sensibly feel how much I am indebted to the encouragement, which you have given me.

My health has been much better during the last two months than it has been before for a year. Bran and chaff I have given to the winds, and upon the whole I find the farinaceous part of grain equally wholesome and vastly more palatable.

My drawing claims your sympathy. I devoted a few days to it in Philadelphia, but it has been totally neglected since. I have neither the time to think of matrimony nor of that broad system of active accomplishment, upon which I intended to build my connubial edifice; but for the wane of my accomplishments I am seeking to indemnify myself by amassing solid intelligence, and after all I may find it as efficacious. To be serious — my days of frivolity are over, and whatever means Fortune places at my disposal will be applied with energy to the achievement of my hopes.

The great race takes place today, unless Virginia has backed out, as report says.¹ You will of course receive from the Public Prints a detail of the transactions of the day. The City is thronged with

¹ Sir Charles, of Virginia, against Eclipse, of New York, both having as grand-sire Old Diomed, imported by Colonel Hoomes.

visitors of both sexes from great distances — whole families are on the spot from Baltimore. All of the fashion of Washington will be present. About two hundred thousand dollars are depending in the form of bets. My only solicitude is that these consummate braggadacios from Virginia may be put down. The same State vanity that governs her Sons in their political course, is also their controlling principle in the humble sphere of horse-jockeying.

I rejoice in the election of Webster.¹ His talents will distinguish him in every sphere; but I have no confidence in the most consummate eloquence when exerted in opposition to radicalism. In our government radicalism is faction — faction, too, of that shameless character, which recognizes no principle of honor or decency. As soon as the spirit of Congress displays itself, I will address you explicitly on political subjects. In the meantime I hope to hear from you and beg you to believe me ever devotedly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

General Brown is recovering and will recover perfectly. He is in command.

I have just returned from the race. Every body was there, President and all. The Virginian paid his forfeit \$5000 for not running, alleging that his horse was lame. The two horses were, however, walked about the course half an hour, and it was evident that they were both in good condition. The Virginian then offered to run a four mile heat for one thousand or fifteen hundred dollars. The New Yorker took him up at fifteen hundred — the race was run immediately — the New York horse kept ahead from the outset, distancing the other, which was compelled to stop the last mile with a leg out of joint. There was no comparison in horses or riders. So Virginia, after challenging the whole United States in the *National Intelligencer*, is beaten on her own terms, has lost six thousand five hundred dollars on the regular bet and about one hundred thousand dollars on others of individuals disinterested, and has her best race horse ruined. Never was boasting more effectually humbled. The "old Dominion" has received a useful lesson from the North and I pray that she may receive one of the same character in the field of politics.

WASHINGTON, 19th Dec., 1822.

MY DEAR SIR, — As I have nothing interesting to say to you in relation to myself I must have recourse to the subjects which are most prolifick of interest here.

Congress has commenced its Session with peculiar vigor. Con-

¹ Member of Congress.

trary to all precedent it has passed a resolution, with the requisite forms for ripening into a law, before the Christmas holidays. Tomorrow the Presidential sanction and signature will be given to the legislative arrangements for the extirpation of Piracy. It seems that governments, in which deliberation bears so important a part as in ours, are not always deficient in resolution and promptitude.

Although the interest which is felt in the subject of the next President, does not manifest itself externally, it is the *primum mobile* of every political disposition here. The multiplicity of candidates has been, contrary to all reasonable expectation, a source of little confusion among their different partizans in Congress, and has really given existence to little opposition among them. But there is a satisfactory mode of accounting for this apparent inconsistency. Mr. Crawford is the great champion of opposition to the present administration. This ground he occupies exclusively, and, if the Radicals prevail, he will infallibly be elevated to the Presidency. All the other candidates connect their hopes with the maintenance of the established policy, and although their respective partizans have final objects, which are different, a general interest to sustain Mr. Monroe and demolish the rising influence of Mr. Crawford binds them all together and gives not only an apparent but a real concert to their operations. As soon as they have defeated the common enemy, dissensions as violent will arise among themselves.

It is difficult to foresee who will be the successful aspirant. Mr. Adams injured himself exceedingly by his 4th of July oration. He has nearly redeemed himself by his triumphant controversy with Mr. Russell;¹ and I think, upon the whole, he is gradually gaining character. Mr. Crawford is certainly declining in public opinion. His interest is single, and it has the special ill luck of animating the enmity of every other. It is difficult to contend against all the world. Mr. Calhoun, as a man of action, is stronger than any other individual in the Cabinet. He has not the learning of Mr. Adams, but in every other respect he is his superior. He has a character of frankness and simplicity, a boldness and energy of spirit, and an openness and benignity of manner, against the influence of which it is almost impossible to contend. But I think the people will consider him too young, and require the test of a further service of eight years in a subordinate department of the Executive.² If New Eng-

¹ In the matter of the "Duplicate Letters," in which dispute Jonathan Russell was so severely handled by the Secretary of State as never to recover his influence and political standing.

² Dix was "an enthusiastic admirer and staunch supporter of Mr. Calhoun, whose cause he advocated with a practised and facile pen." Dix, *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, I. 66.

land was united and would declare herself in favor of Mr. Adams, he would inevitably be successful. If she does not act promptly, there is danger that she may be defeated by more timely combinations in other quarters.

The only perceptible change is the diminution of Mr. Crawford's popularity. There have been some very important instances of dereliction among his partizans in the Senate since last winter, and the new elections by the people have been very generally unfriendly to him except in his native State. His friends have acknowledged him to be the Champion of Radicalism, and the confession has done him serious injury. I only pray that prospects may remain as favorable. The great object of every patriot must be to sustain the present administration, to preserve the public institutions, and to demolish that scheme of principles which proposes to dispense with the common preparations of nations against disaster and to throw upon posterity burthens, which properly belong to the present generation.

I am a member of Gen'l Brown's domestic, as well as military establishment, am well, studious, and happy.

With my best respects to your family and with the hope of hearing from you soon, I am, my dear Sir, Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

30 Dec., 1822.

DEAR SIR, — I send you an article in the *Washington Republican* signed "Senex," which I wrote hastily. It is a matter of delicacy considering my connexion with the Government — therefore this intelligence is for your eye alone. In great haste, Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

I am in better health than I have enjoyed for years — am constantly occupied and happy in all respects.

WASHINGTON, 3rd January, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have received your frank letter, and return you my most sincere thanks. I feel very sensibly the obligation I owe to your frank expressions, and I trust I shall never shrink from the observation of truth even when it is derogatory from my own merit. I showed your letter to General Brown and I am authorized to assure you from him that, although he agrees with you that vanity is the great danger which threatens me, I have made a regular progress in fortifying myself against it.

I am in great haste, and have only time to say that I send a paper

containing an article which I wrote signed "X."¹ I think in point of style it is the best (or rather the least bad) piece, which I have written. I should like your opinion on the pieces I have sent you. If they have any merit, you need not be afraid to tell me so. I think I am proof against compliments, and I am fully sensible of my imperfections. Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

NEW YORK, 25th May, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR,—I know not what apology I shall make for my long silence, but I should certainly have written you more frequently but for numerous employments and some ill health. I supposed my health was entirely re-established, and I presumed on it so far as to depart from my strict habits of exercise and diet. But I have been and still am a sufferer. However, I continue my studies with great assiduity.

I wrote to you in January or February enclosing at the same time some numbers on the Niagara campaign published in the *New York Statesman* knowing your predilection for General Brown. To this letter I have never received a reply. I informed you that I was on the point of commencing my studies in form in this city — which I have done. I am now in a law office, issuing writs, etc., etc., and if my papers all pass judicial inspection I shall, on passing an examination, be admitted to practice early next year. It will depend on my health whether I leave the army or not. I am very anxious to abandon a profession, in which there is no chance of distinction in peaceful times, and nothing but poverty and ill health have bound me to it so long.

I send you a copy of the *Statesman* containing an article signed "Pericles," which I wrote very hastily and without premeditation. I should be glad to know what you think of it, but I fear your criticism, as it is very open to it. With devoted regard, your devoted servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

NEW YORK, 16th June, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR,—I regret exceedingly that you did not receive the numbers I mentioned, particularly as they may have fallen into bad hands. You did not inform me if you received the letter, which I addressed to you at the same time. It was of the most confidential character, and I regret that it should have mis-

¹ See Dix, *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, I. 66.

carried. No one knows, and no one must know, that I wrote those numbers. They contain nothing but truth, but the circumstance, if known, might injure those with whom I am connected. . . .

I am very hard at work. Ever devotedly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

NEW YORK, 14th August, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you a pamphlet,¹ which I wrote at the request of several political men in this City in aid of the great cause of our national administration. The views, as well as the arrangement of the discussion, are my own. It was written in two days, and copied for the press the third. This I mention in defence of the style. Those, who are better able to judge than myself, say that the arguments are unanswerable. I must, of course, be kept entirely out of view as the author; but I may hereafter be known as such with great advantage to myself. My ambition is to divest myself of my military connexions and to embark on the broad ocean of law and politicks. My health is feeble, and this is a most serious drawback. However, I must do as well as I can, and trust the rest to fortune.

I am very much engaged at this moment.

Dr. Perkins left us yesterday, and will give you all the news. He has not seen the pamphlet, nor is he aware that I am the author of it. I wish him to remain in ignorance of it. With my best regards to your family and my ardent wishes for your happiness, I am, with the most respectful regard,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON, 22nd February, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter in relation to Dr. Porter and did all I could to aid his application. Mr. Calhoun, however, told me very frankly at the first interview I had with him on the subject, that there was but little chance of his success. The office has been eagerly sought, and there was a partial commitment before your letter was received. I sincerely regret that I cannot communicate more acceptable intelligence.

I have intended for a long time to write to you on the great question, which now agitates this Confederacy; but the doubtful nature of the subject has made me silent. I could have said nothing that would not have been purely conjectural, and I have always had a reluctance to meddle with the business of prophecy. The

¹ *On the Mode of constituting Presidential Electors. Addressed to the People of the State of New-York. 1823.*

question has at length assumed a more intelligible shape — at least, in some respects. For instance, I consider it well settled that the caucus nomination will have very little influence, if any; and, as Mr. Crawford's hopes have been altogether dependent on this measure, I consider his doom as sealed. The late caucus is deemed, not an engine to sustain the Republican family, but as an instrument of its destruction. It will, therefore, be resisted. Mr. Crawford, however, will continue to control a small but devoted party, and may, perhaps, eventually turn the Presidential scale. Mr. Calhoun's chances of success depended on the course of Pennsylvania. This state, it appears, will support the Hero of New Orleans, and Mr. Calhoun's fate is settled. My opinion is that the West will renounce Mr. Clay's pretensions, and will very generally support General Jackson. Mr. Adams, Mr. Crawford and General Jackson, therefore, remain the strong competitors. Between these three I have certainly a very decided choice. Mr. Crawford's connexion with the Radical party, his doubtful principles and disingenuous course in the administration forbid me to desire his elevation. Mr. Adams has extraordinary merits. His extensive acquirements, incorruptible morals and devotion to his country's service furnish him with the strongest and most indisputable claims. But he is, I fear, little fitted for popular government. No man could administer an absolute system better, because he would never prostitute the possession of power to corrupt or tyrannical ends. But I am apprehensive that he will be found to possess very little talent for managing men, which is the most important of all qualities under a government where the people have so immediate a participation, as under ours, in the business of administration. I fear, therefore, should he be elected, that his administration will be disturbed by dangerous and distracting feuds. Swayed by apprehensions like these, and having been taught by estrangement from the region of my birth and education and by national habits of thought to renounce my sectional partialities, I am strongly inclined to wish for General Jackson's success. The character of this great man is not at all understood. He has been induced to adopt violent measures for the attainment of useful ends, but I am convinced by what I have seen this winter that he is a good man, and that he knows how to govern his passions. It is obvious that General Jackson would have many advantages over Mr. Adams in administering the government. It is a principal object with the sound politicians of the country to abolish party distinctions and to elevate talent, wherever it is found. But as Mr. Adams has been a federalist the least inclination towards federal men or federal measures would excite alarm and disturb his popularity. General Jackson, having always been a violent demo-

crat, might avail himself of the talents of the federal party without danger, and no one believes that he would be a party man. In fact he is known to despise most cordially the petty Bucktail interest of New York, and the kindred interests of the Eastern States. He is, indeed, the only man who can resuscitate the federal party (since Mr. Calhoun's fate is sealed) and, by uniting its virtue with the virtue of the Republican party, cast all the ignorance, depravity and infatuation of the community into a small and harmless minority. I should be glad to know your sentiments on this subject, though I cannot expect that you will consent to renounce Mr. Adams. Very sincerely and devotedly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON, 12th April, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received your letter a few days since, and return you my thanks. There is no one, whose letters afford me so much satisfaction as yours, and I hope you will think a leisure moment, devoted to me occasionally, not unprofitably employed.

The view you have taken of Mr. Adams is in every respect sound, and I heartily concur with you. I believe I said in my last that I was rather inclined to prefer Jackson. My mind is not at all settled between them, or, if it is, it is not in favor of the latter. I have great apprehensions from Mr. Adams' ignorance of the springs by which men are excited to action. He knows not how to govern, and I fear he will have dissensions in his Cabinet. General Jackson is superior to him only in this one point. On all others it would be unjust to Mr. Adams even to institute a comparison between them. In patriotism, purity of character and in general information Mr. Adams has no superior; and when I am really frank with myself, I do think there is an internal admission that his elevation to the Presidency would be more grateful to my feelings than that of his rival.

I have this day been examined before the Judges of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia and admitted to the practice of the law. I intend to go to the City of New York in May, and be admitted to the Supreme Court there. This I shall do, not with any immediate view to leave the army, but because my course of application justifies it, and because it is a distinction which may be worth something to me. I receive fifteen hundred dollars, and it would be madness to relinquish this certainty for a precarious dependence on an untried profession. But I am far from relishing my military life. My ambition leads me to the forum, but my poverty, I fear, will be a perpetual bar to the attainment of my wishes. However, I shall go on with my studies, and gain all the knowledge I can,

for knowledge, according to Bacon, is power. With my best respects to your family and with assurances of devoted regard for yourself, I am, Dear Sir, truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON CITY, 13th January, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received your favour two days ago, and return you my thanks for your kind attention to the commission for my mother.

My plans with regard to an establishment in New York and the dissolution of my military connexions are definitively formed, and I am authorized to believe that nothing but ill health will be able to frustrate them. I shall leave General Brown's family in the month of March on furlough for a year as a lieutenant, and shall open an office in the city of New York. My income as a lieutenant will support me the first year, and the proceeds of my practice (whatever they are) will be reserved for my support the second year. In two years I trust I shall be able to make my way without extraneous aid. I ought also to class among my means a promise of business from the government which will be worth three or four hundred dollars per annum, and now and then an equal sum for a case, which will employ me a month or six weeks. I am, therefore, authorised to believe that the patronage of the government will be worth from six to eight hundred dollars *communibus annis*. If I should hereafter in the course of my practice become qualified for the performance of the duties of district attorney of the United States, I may be able to secure such an appointment through the influence of my friends and my personal connexions with prominent individuals in the government. However, I make no account of contingencies like this. My reliance is upon the course of business and my own unassisted industry. I have but one drawback — the support and education of my brother Sherman;¹ but I must make some arrangement to educate him at Dartmouth at as little expense as possible. He is a boy of great promise, and I shall not abandon him to his own exertions until he has attained a maturity of mind and a fund of knowledge which will fit him for struggling with the world. I have thus given you a plain view of my prospects. I should have asked your advice before I formed my resolution, but I deemed it a case of responsibility, which would have made such an application invidious and improper. That it has your approbation I know and rejoice.

My opinion and my earnest hope are that Mr. Adams will be

¹ Roger Sherman Dix (1810-1849). A biographical sketch of him is in Coffin, *History of Boscawen and Webster*, 356.

President in two months from this time. He is strong from his eminent qualifications for the [post] — a point which becomes the stronger as it is investigated. There is not the slightest evidence of excitement among those who are to make the choice. The question of principle is settled, Mr. Adams and General Jackson being identified with the same system of public measures; and it is now a mere matter of personal preference. My feelings are, upon mature deliberation, all with Mr. Adams.

Your family afflictions have my sincere sympathy, and I trust this letter may find you all in renovated health. With my best wishes for their happiness and yours, I am, my dear Sir, ever respectfully and faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

COPENHAGEN, 9th August, 1826.

MY DEAR SIR, — The treaty, which I brought out to this Court, will be ratified tomorrow,¹ and I shall set out the ensuing day on my way home. I shall, however, pass through the free States of Lübeck and Hamburgh, through a part of Holland and France, and you may, therefore, receive this before my arrival in the United States.

On my way hither I passed through England, and was confirmed by my observations in the opinions, which I have long held with regard to that country. Her resources are unimpaired, and she is at this moment capable of greater efforts than she ever has been at any past stage of her progress. Her fiscal burdens are a source of embarrassment to her government; but, great as they are, they would not be felt for a moment, if any powerful impulse could be applied to the feelings of the British people. All the suggestions, which we hear, of the decline or the debility of this stupendous power are idle — and so we shall find, whenever she is stimulated, by any strongly exciting causes, to action.

This kingdom (Denmark) is exceedingly embarrassed in its finances — more so by far than Great Britain, though her burdens are nominally inferior. In the latter there are a thousand springs of industry to sustain and alleviate the pressure of her embarrassments — here there are none. There is not a more arbitrary form of government in Europe than that of Denmark — but public opinion, notwithstanding, exerts a powerful influence over the operations of the administration. The King² has been long upon the throne, is a man

¹ A treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation, concluded at Washington April 26, 1826, by Henry Clay and Peter Pedersen.

² Frederick VI.

of great mildness, and has no disposition to indulge in any unnecessary exercise of power.

I was exceedingly delighted with the neighboring Kingdom of Sweden, in which I passed about ten days. The country is very picturesque; and the inhabitants are the most civil, honest and good-natured people in Europe. They have a voice in the government, and they are very proud of their little show of freedom. There is a spirit among them on this subject, which I have not remarked anywhere else on the Continent, although I have been in four other different states. They remember too that Charles the Twelfth was their countryman, and much of his boldness and intrepidity has descended to them. In one word, I am delighted with this frank and gallant people, and I have felt nowhere, not even in England, so many causes of interest and sympathy.

I regret exceedingly the necessity, under which I find myself, of returning so soon to the United States, but it is not without the hope of returning to Europe at some future day. The climate agrees with me, and the happiness, which I experience in my matrimonial connexion,¹ has had a most friendly influence upon my mind, and, through my mind, upon my animal frame. Mental serenity I find to be indispensable to health.

I saw Dr. Abernethy in London, and shall always look back upon my interview with him with great satisfaction.² He treated me with the most particular civility, and much to my surprise, as I have always heard his manners were exceedingly rough. He commenced conversation by telling me I was an American, and that my countrymen had more good sense than any other people in the world. From this subject he passed on to many others, and amused me, for more than twenty minutes, more than I was ever amused before in the same space of time. Among other matters he told me several excellent stories. I was delighted with him, and can assure you, though such an assurance is very unnecessary, that he is in every respect a most extraordinary man. He gave me no particular advice, but I believe he has put me on the proper course of thinking. I mentioned your name as a friend, by whose advice I had called to consult him, and I found you were very well known to him. The only reason I have to regret that I do not return through England is that I cannot have another interview with him.

Will you excuse this hasty letter? I am preparing to dine with

¹ He married, May 29, 1826, Catharine, adopted daughter of John Jordan Morgan.

² John Abernethy (1764-1831). Dix wrote an account of his interview, which was printed in the *New York American*, and is reprinted in Dix, *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, II. 69.

the Prime Minister, and have only this moment to write you before my departure. With my best regards to your family, I am ever, respectfully and truly yours, etc.,

JOHN A. DIX.

NEW YORK, 20th May, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have ascertained that there are at this moment two vacant professorships of mathematics in collegiate institutions in the United States — one in the College at Philadelphia and one in the University of Virginia. I do not know the value of the latter, but in general the officers of the institution are very liberally compensated. The former is worth twenty to twenty-five hundred dollars per annum. That Mr. Grund¹ may have a chance of obtaining either the one or the other, I will write this evening to President Beasley,² who is at the head of the Pennsylvania College and to Mr. Madison, who has a controlling influence over the University of Virginia. The object of my letters will be to request that the situations may be kept open until Mr. Grund can have time to exhibit his pretensions. I know both those gentlemen personally, and feel authorized to address them. In the meantime it would be well for Mr. G. to prepare for the application of whatever influence it may be in his power to command. I will write you further on this subject. With my best regards to your family and my respects to Mr. Grund, I am faithfully your friend and Servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

My friend, Dr. Anderson³ of Columbia College, has heard of Mr. Grund, and feels an interest in his success.

Mr. Coolidge,⁴ who married Miss Randolph, may be of service. Mr. Madison thinks very highly of him, and a letter from him immediately would be of great use.

NEW YORK, 24th May, 1827.

DEAR SIR, — I enclose a letter, which I have just received from President Beasley of the University of Pennsylvania. Will you please return it to me by my brother Sherman, who will leave Boston on Tuesday morning? If Mr. Grund should not think it advisable to go on to Philadelphia, I will transmit to Dr. Beasley any testimonials it may be deemed proper to present. With regard to the

¹ Francis Joseph Grund (1805-1863).

² Frederick Beasley (1777-1845).

³ Henry James Anderson (1799-1875).

⁴ Joseph Coolidge, Jr. (1798-1879). He married, May, 1825, Ellen Wayles Randolph, granddaughter of Thomas Jefferson.

personal qualifications, such as manners etc., I can testify to the satisfaction of all concerned. You will understand the importance of acting without delay. The letter explains all. If you have time, I should be glad to receive the papers by my brother.

. . . In haste, Most truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

NEW YORK, 6th November, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR, — I returned here a few days ago after a long absence from the city, during which I was almost constantly unwell. I left it very suddenly on the 1st July, when I found I could not safely remain in it a day longer. . . .

Can you tell me anything of Mr. Grund? I wrote to several of the Trustees of the College in Philadelphia. From Mr. Hopkinson¹ I had a letter saying the matter was then undecided. I also wrote to Mr. Grund, but I have not heard from him. I feel an interest in his success, and I hope a place may be found for him.

I shall send you a sketch of the condition of this city, which I wrote last spring, and which was published in my absence.² It is a small affair, but contains views, which may, perhaps, be new to you. My absence from the city must account for the delay in sending you a copy. It was published in August.

On the first of this month, my wife presented me with a fine boy, who, as well as his mother, is doing perfectly well. You may fancy the gratification this event has given me, and the interest it has excited in a family without children, as Mr. Morgan's is.

I have been much engaged during the last month at West Point in writing. My brother is doing well. He is excelled by some in study, but his moral deportment and subordination have been unexceptionable. It is an admirable system, and Colonel Thayer³ is an invaluable public servant. His genius and high tone of character are enough, of themselves, to work a total revolution in the character of the army through their influence upon the minds, which are annually added to the establishment. I hope you are all well. Will you present me and my wife to Mrs. Shattuck, and believe me Ever faithfully, your friend and Servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

¹ Joseph Hopkinson (1770-1842).

² *Sketch of the Resources of the City of New York, with a View of its Municipal Government, Population, &c., from the foundation of the City to the date of the Latest Statistical Accounts.* 1827. It was printed without the author's name.

³ Sylvanus Thayer (1785-1872).

NEW YORK, 28th November, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,— I received your favor several days ago, when I was confined to the house by indisposition. . . .

You ask me what course Governor Clinton¹ is disposed to take on the pending question of the Presidential election. I think I observed to you in a conversation at Boston that he would be first for himself, if he believed himself to have any chance of success; and second for the candidate, whose election now would be most favorable to his own hereafter — and this one I believed to be General Jackson. Every indication justifies these impressions of him. No man can take exception to the Governor's course. He is a high-minded man, governed, whenever any public interest is in question, by fixed principles. With regard to this state, it must be considered as lost to the administration at Washington. General Jackson will carry with him a large number of the electoral votes. The political journals hold a totally contradictory language on this subject; but it is a matter of policy on both sides to speak confidently, for the wavering are often determined in their course by a show of strength. If the question remains, where it now is, between Mr. Adams and General Jackson, I believe the latter will be elected by a considerable majority of the electoral votes. But new ground is about to be taken, and what is to be [the] issue of this cannot be foreseen. The friends of Mr. Clinton intend to bring him into the field upon the supposition that he will divide the strength of Mr. Adams and General Jackson, and, with his own permanent force, be elected by the colleges. I believe the result will be to bring three candidates into the House of Representatives and throw the choice upon that body. Who will succeed there no one can foretell. But it is a result which all should unite to avert. It not only equalizes the influence of different States but it is an inevitable source of intrigue and bargaining. The votes of the small states have been purchased, and will be purchased again; and whenever the choice devolves on a body so organized, the chance is that he will succeed, who is least fastidious about the means, which he employs to secure his success. I would rather see the worst man in the republic elevated for a time by fair means than to behold the fountain of political power corrupted almost at its source. I do not intend to insinuate any doubt of Mr. Adams' fairness in the last election, but he is, unfortunately for him, connected with men, who are altogether unworthy of the association — men, who hesitate not to resort to measures, which he would spurn. I will, however, say no more on this subject now.

¹ De Witt Clinton (1769-1828). See a letter of General Brown, in *Dix, Memoirs of John A. Dix*, I. 105.

I beg you to give our best regards to Mrs. S. We are not insensible to the kind interest, which you express in the happy addition to the number of our family. With my best regards, I am ever respectfully and truly,

JOHN A. DIX.

My brother Sherman is still doing very well. In *conduct* especially he is unexceptionable.

COOPERSTOWN, 24th August, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received your kind letter a day or two ago when I was on the point of writing to you to communicate the intelligence, which you have already received from Mr. Sullivan, that I have resigned my Commission in the Army and have fixed my residence at this place.¹ I have a beautiful place directly upon the banks of the Susquehannah river, which lies about one hundred feet below me. It is but a small stream here, taking its rise at the outlet of the Otsego Lake about one hundred rods from my door. The village of Cooperstown also lies immediately below me, and I look over it to the head of the Lake, about eight miles distant. I have about five acres of orchard, half an acre of garden, and about an acre and a half of vacant ground prettily shaded by fruit and forest trees. Indeed, so far as position goes, I have nothing to desire. I hope to get a little practice in the law; but I shall profit by my past experience and do no more than is authorized by the state of my health. My father-in-law confides all his business to me, and as he has about one hundred tenants in the adjacent counties, I shall have employment in looking after them. Some business in the way of litigation will be inseparable from so considerable an agency. Politicks, I confess, is the boundary of my hopes; but I am, for the time, disfranchised, a previous residence having been assumed in our last enactment with regard to the right of Suffrage as a qualification for its exercise. The controversy between the friends of Mr. Adams and General Jackson must, therefore, be decided without any agency of mine. If I mistake not the aspect of the times, however, contests more deeply rooted in principle will ere long distract us. You will at once understand me as referring to the rigid and latitudinarian doctrines which are held with regard to the construction of the Constitution. I have no reference to the prevailing excitement with regard to the tariff. But I believe a class of politicians are springing up, who by silently usurping and exercising powers not granted by the Constitution, threaten to rob that instrument of all its sanctity.

¹ He resigned from the army in July, 1828, and went to manage some property of his father-in-law at Cooperstown, N. Y.

It is our best safeguard, and the moment it is divested of authority, there can be no appeal but to the arm of power. I do not think we are in any present danger; but abuse is best remedied by resisting it at the outset. . . .

Could you not pay my wife and me a visit at our rural residence? We could show you a beautiful country, and you ought to see the great Canal and the great city. We should be very much gratified if you could come and pass a few weeks with us, and we might thus be made instrumental in dispelling the influence of those deep afflictions, with which it has pleased Heaven to visit your domestic peace.

My wife returns you her thanks for your friendly expressions in behalf of her little boy and herself, and unites with me in sincere wishes for your happiness. She bids me say that, if Boston is like New York, you can have no difficulty, when you accede to our solicitations for a visit from you, in finding coadjutors enough of the faculty, who will be very glad to take your patients off your hands during your temporary absence. We shall go to housekeeping about the 20th September and would then be very happy to see you, or next summer, if you could better leave home then. I am, Dear Sir, with sincere respect and esteem, Your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

COOPERSTOWN, 5th January, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received your favor the day before yesterday, and return you my most sincere thanks, in which my wife unites, for your kind wishes in our behalf and in that of our little family. It would give us both sincere gratification to receive you here, and although Apple-hill should not realize the expectations which you may have formed of its rural beauties, we can, at all events, assure you that you shall meet no disappointment in the feelings, with which you will be welcomed. I can sincerely say that I look back to the period of my early connexion with you for the far greater part of the incentives, which have borne me on thus far in the career of life, and to which I shall be principally indebted for whatever it may be my good fortune to attain hereafter.

The details, which you gave me in relation to your children, could not but interest me, and I trust they may live to cheer and comfort you in the decline of life.

My sister's health is pretty good. The medical gentlemen, whom I consulted, think her in no danger of growing worse, if she exercises a proper discretion in her dress, diet, etc. In all this my wife and I endeavour to control her; but she is a giddy girl, and requires

incessant watchfulness. I am very much indebted to you for your suggestions, and will put them in execution.

My position in this county¹ is as favorable as I could have anticipated; but I have two or three rivals in politics, who will do all in their power to extend the period of my probation. I am, however, Chairman of the Central Committee, the body which regulates all the political concerns of the county; and I am the first, I presume, who has attained to that dignity after a single year's residence. In this capacity it has devolved on me to speak in public on several occasions, and I have met with uncommon success, when it is considered that my lips were hermetically sealed, as to all oratorical purposes, during my sixteen years' military service. I feel the want of practice exceedingly, and shall labour under this inconvenience, in all probability, to the end of my days. But, do you remember a few lessons Capt. Morse of the Army (formerly the tragedian) gave me at your solicitation in reading? They have an influence upon me to this day; and, if I ever do myself any credit as a speaker, it will be in a great degree the fruit of these early impressions. We have a debating society in the village, and I am a regular debater for the purpose of practice.

I have sent you from time to time several of my compositions; but as you do not acknowledge the reception of any of them, I fear they have miscarried. I sent you about a month ago a speech,² which I made on the occasion of forming an African Colonization Society in this County, and I shall send you another copy in the mail which will convey this to you. I sent a copy to Mr. Sullivan and another to Mr. Temple, but have not heard of the reception of either.

My wife unites with me in sincere prayers for the health and happiness of your children and yourself, and I remain, with the hope of hearing from you again and also of seeing you here at no distant time, Your friend and servant,

JOHN A. DIX.

COOPERSTOWN, 15th February, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your last would have been instantly answered but that I have been incessantly occupied since its reception by office business and an attendance on one of our Courts.

Your opinion of my Colonization speech is far above its merits, and I can readily account for it by referring to your long and devoted regard to me. I am invited by the Managers of the state

¹ Otsego County.

² November 12, 1829. An interesting letter of Jefferson on colonization is in Adams, *Writings of Gallatin*, II. 178.

society of New York to address the public at the Capitol in Albany in March or April, and have accepted the invitation. If my remarks are published, I will send you a copy.

It is with great reluctance that I listen for a moment to the suggestion that you may abandon your intention of visiting me, and I cannot relinquish the hope of seeing you. But, in the meantime, send George to us, and we will do what we can to make his visit agreeable. Whatever his temper of mind may be, we can find something to harmonize with it. We have books, magnificent scenery, society, and, indeed, almost everything we desire. June is our most delightful month, but we have none that is unpleasant between May and November. We shall expect to see him at no distant time. My wife goes to New York in the spring, but is always here by the first of June. She unites with me in best wishes for your health and happiness, and I remain, in haste, but with sincere regard, Your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

COOPERSTOWN, 23rd December, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,—I very much regretted that I had not the pleasure of seeing your son at my house last summer, as you encouraged me to expect; and I more particularly regret it as I am just breaking up my establishment here for a year or two and cannot, therefore, hope to see him next summer. I have indulged the hope of visiting Boston next spring, but fear I shall be disappointed. I am going to Albany on the first of January as Adjutant General of this State.¹ The appointment is a very respectable one, with the rank of Brigadier General and a salary of eight hundred dollars per annum. This will just about cover extraordinary expenses. My old friend, Haines,² occupied this place (under Governor Clinton) at the time of his death. It is rather a political, than a military, station, and on that account the more agreeable to me; for my martial propensities have been regularly declining from the moment you put me upon a literary track shortly after the termination of the War of 1812. I am not sure that the "spirit-stirring drum," even if assisted by all "the pomp and circumstance," etc., would have power to reanimate my latent aspirations after military fame.

I am very much hurried in making my arrangements for a removal, and am obliged to close. Perhaps I may have the pleasure of seeing George in Albany. I may not be at housekeeping; but I could nevertheless show him the Canal, Rail Road, and the other

¹ His appointment was dated January 4, 1831.

² Charles G. Haines.

lions of the place. With my regards to him and best wishes for yourself, I am, Dear Sir, very respectfully and truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

ALBANY, 25th January, 1832.

DEAR SIR,—I enclosed to you about a fortnight ago a report made to the Senate of this State upon two bills referred to me for examination last spring.¹ I hope you have received it. There is much in it which treats of details, and therefore not likely to interest those who are not connected with the militia. The whole militia system of this State was near been broken up last winter by hasty legislation. It will by the present legislature be sustained by nearly a unanimous vote; and I am induced by the declarations of the members to believe that the change of opinion has been wrought by the views presented by my report. I have cause, therefore, to be satisfied.

I have long flattered myself with the hope of seeing you in Boston, but my engagements are so constant that I can find no time to absent myself from the State. The duties of public officers in New York, those especially who are immediately connected with the government, are exceedingly arduous. My life is one of drudgery, without any present encouragement—I live altogether upon the future. For the last four years the state of parties has been nearly the same, and there is but little prospect of a change. Anti-masonry will be altogether extinguished at the next election, in November. We shall give General Jackson a very large majority; and, as we choose our electors by General ticket, he will receive the entire vote of this State. After his re-election we shall be less united, and many interesting events will flow out of our divisions. It is probably unnecessary to say to you that I am on the side of Mr. Van Buren, and that all my exertions will be lent to promote his advancement to the Chief Magistracy of the Union as the Successor of General Jackson. There is some hesitation at Washington in confirming his appointment,² and so far as his friends in this State are concerned, his rejection would be decidedly gratifying to the great majority of them. Those who are anxious that he should be confirmed, are so from public, rather than personal, considerations. His rejection might have an unfavorable influence upon the success of the negotiation, with which he is charged, relative to our North-Eastern boundary; but this is the only light, in which we should look upon it as unfortunate.

¹ On the militia system of the State. It is printed in Dix, *Speeches and Addresses*, II. 116.

² To be minister to Great Britain.

The next division of parties in the United States will, I am satisfied, turn rather upon principles than preferences for particular men. One of the principal causes of division will be the United States Bank; a second, though a less decided one, the question of reducing the revenues of the government to the standard of its ordinary expenditures, abandoning the whole system of internal improvement. I am of opinion with regard to the first, that there should be no re-charter; and with regard to the second that our revenue, after discharging the public debt, should be reduced to the lowest possible standard. It should, I conceive, be a primary object with the government of the United States to divest the administration as far as possible of patronage, and so to regulate its imposition upon the industry of the citizens as to place the least possible amount of public wealth at its own disposition. The success of the great experiment which we are making in self-government, depends on the simplicity and quietude, with which the system is kept in operation. The administration of wealth almost necessarily leads to profusion and violent contentions. One of the results of such a system as I consider safe and likely to perpetuate the principles, on which our government is founded, may be a want of energy in times of emergency; but this is, I conceive, the only evil consequence, and it must be regarded as the price, which we pay for free-government. But I beg your pardon for this dissertation, and remain most respectfully and truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

COOPERSTOWN, 28 July, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have only time to say, that I return you my most sincere thanks for your kind letter last February and the excellent advice which it contained. The danger pointed out by you — that of acting in political matters under too strong an excitement of feeling — is unquestionably the most imminent, which I have to guard against. I feel it more sensibly from the self-examination, which I instituted immediately after the receipt of your letter, and I shall be the better able to avoid it. When I say that I have profited more by your counsels than by those of any other person living, I wish you to be assured that I put a proper estimate on them, and that they will always be received hereafter, in whatever situation it may be [my] lot to be placed, with pleasure and thankfulness.

I send by my brother two of my productions. I would particularly commend to your perusal the review of the article in the American Quarterly. It was written soon after the receipt of your

letter, and I believe it contains nothing, at which a political opponent could take offence. 'T is an honest view of the old slander of my friends in Albany under the name of "the money-changers." The Report of the Regents of the University is valuable for the documents it contains. The "Report" proper I wrote. The abstracts were prepared by the Secretary — this being mere manual labor. There is a single position in the report, which I would explain if I had time: but it may, perhaps, not need explanation. I have two or three other more recent productions, but they are purely political; and I will not trouble you to read them.

My brother is full of talent, and a noble-hearted boy — but he wants soberizing. He is rather impatient of advice, but listens to mine with patience, and follows it as often as any one who knows him would expect. He promises me to study Blackstone, etc., at his leisure so as to make himself acquainted with the general principles of law, and afterwards to pursue the course. You might excite his pride by setting forth the advantages he would derive from it, if you have an opportunity. But I must close. With my sincere prayers for your happiness, I am truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

ALBANY, 7 May, 1834.

MY DEAR SIR, — I should long ago have acknowledged your favor by your son George but for a great press of engagements since we had the pleasure of his company and my absence from the city during the last week. I return you my sincere thanks for the beautiful specimen of New England manufacture, which you were so kind as to send me, and assure you that I shall wear it with pride and satisfaction. My attachment to my native land has been in no wise diminished by my long absence from it, and I take a deep interest, as ever I shall, in whatever concerns her honor or her prosperity. The times, I know, are unfavorable to the prosecution of the great schemes of enterprize, in which she has embarked so great an amount of capital and industry. But I believe the embarrassments, which exist as well with us as with you, though not perhaps to the same extent, will soon pass away. A very intelligent friend of mine, who has devoted nearly his whole life to financial operations and studies, predicted a year ago all that we have experienced during the last six months.

With your son George both my wife and I are much delighted. He is intelligent, well-informed, and modest. Had it been my good fortune at his age to have half his discretion, I should have been spared much mortification and embarrassment in my journey thus

far through life. My wife and I urged him to stay at our house, but he declined separating himself from his travelling-companions. On his return we trust he will be able to pass a few days with us. If you could meet him here, we should be still more gratified.

I have been very anxiously looking forward to a period when I shall be able to visit Boston; but it still seems remote. The coming summer will probably bring with it as much labor as I have had thrown upon me during the three last. When I say to you that I have not been in Utica, ninety-six miles west of this city, during the last twelve years, you will be able to form some estimate of my domestic habits. I fear I cannot hope, as long as I hold my present office, to be less sedentary than I now am and indeed have been for the last three years.

It would give me much gratification to receive a visit from you, if it were but for a few days. [You] gave me some encouragement to expect it a few years ago; and your excursion could never be made at a better time. The progress of this State in the acquisition of wealth and in the extension of her internal commerce is uninterrupted, notwithstanding much, which you may have heard to the contrary on high authority. The receipts on account of tolls on our canals during the month of April exceed the receipts for that month in any previous year. With my best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, Dear Sir, most respectfully and truly your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

ALBANY, 5 January, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR, — Since I received your favor by Major Grafton¹ I have been constantly engaged — too much so to acknowledge its reception. Tomorrow our legislature meets. I have four reports to make, neither of which is finished, and two of which are not even begun. I say this by way of apology for the brief note, which I am about to write.

I did all I could for Major Grafton. My father-in-law, Mr. Morgan, who is in Congress, and to whom I wrote has interested himself strongly in the application. I received a letter from him after Major Grafton's departure saying that he had spoken to the Secretary of War several times on the subject. The Secretary is well disposed, and I trust the appointment will be made. The Major

¹ The army lists give Joseph Grafton, of Massachusetts, captain 21st infantry, March 24, 1812, major, June 26, 1813, resigned, September 1, 1814, and was Surveyor of the port of Boston, 1843-1845. The object is explained in the next letter.

must be admonished, however, of the uncertainty of all such matters.

We are all well, and my wife is much obliged by your friendly remembrance. When you see or write to George, please remember us to him.

When my reports are printed, I will send them to you. My health is good, and I feel well. My position here, in all but the compensation annexed to it, suits me, although it is full of responsibility. Massachusetts affords no idea, in her political or statistical concerns, of the burden, which is thrown upon public officers here. We are worked hard in our offices; and, as political men, we have our hands full with the inroads of aristocracy on the one side and agrarianism on the other. The middle course, held with perseverance and firmness, has proved our safety in all emergencies; for whenever danger has appeared from either of the two parties referred to, we are sure to be reinforced from the other. I feel easy, because I feel independent. I could leave my post at any moment without reluctance, and with the assurance that, with a reasonable share of health, I should be able to discharge all my obligations to those, who are dependent on me. But the probability is that I shall remain where I am for some time to come. The State is decidedly with Mr. Van Buren, and nothing can detach the majority of the people from him.

But I must bid you adieu for the present. When I commenced, I did not expect to write so long a letter. When you have nothing better to do, please let me hear from you, and believe me, ever, sincerely yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

ALBANY, 16th May, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your letter of the 7th of April came to hand in due time, and I laid it aside to answer it when the legislature should have adjourned and the press of business in my office should have somewhat subsided. I did not discover until I reperused it to-day that I had been guilty of an omission in failing to answer promptly that part of it, which relates to young Grafton.¹ I supposed that, in asking my opinion with regard to a further attempt to procure the appointment of cadet for him "next June" (of which you thought there was still a hope), you meant June, 1836. On a more careful examination I perceive you meant June now at hand. As the cadets recently appointed are to be at West Point in the first week of next month, all vacancies, if any have occurred, will ere

¹ Henry Dearborn Grafton (1817-1855), cadet, July, 1835, served in the Mexican war, reaching the rank of captain, and resigned in 1854.

this have been filled, and I presume it is now too late to renew the attempt we made in favor of your young friend. I was disappointed to hear he had not succeeded. From the confident expectation indulged by Mr. Morgan, I am sure he was equally so. I can only add, that, if the appointment has not already come, I stand ready to unite next year in another effort to procure it.

The legislature has adjourned, and I am somewhat relieved of the immediate pressure of business. I am sorry to say, however, that I see little prospect of relief even for a month or two in summer. I have to prepare for taking the census under the authority of the State, and the legislature have called on me to report a plan for a geological survey of the State at the next session. I have, therefore, the prospect of a busy summer, and the autumn and winter bring with them full employment. I regret it, for I had indulged the hope of once more seeing you before another revolution of the seasons should be complete. This hope I must relinquish, unless you will make us a visit — an event, which my family would most sincerely rejoice in.

On the seventh instant my wife presented me with a daughter. The mother, the new-comer and my three boys are all well; and I have to acknowledge the further kindness of Providence in according to me an unusual share of health.

My wife unites with me in best regards to you, and returns her thanks for the friendly invitation in your last to make you a visit. I am, Dear Sir, most truly and respectfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

ALBANY, 4th January, 1836.

MY DEAR SIR, — I beg you to accept for yourself and your family my wife's and my best wishes and congratulations on the commencement of a new year, which we trust will prove to you an auspicious one.

Tomorrow commences the session of our legislature. It brings with it constant employment for me during the next four months and a half, and I, therefore, avail myself of the last moment remaining to me to write you a few lines. My geological report will be sent in the day after tomorrow, together with a report on the common schools, both of which I have written since the 18th of November. With respect to the former I feel a good deal of anxiety, for the very sufficient reason that I know nothing whatever of the subject, excepting from a little general reading. I shall, of course, send it to you, and I shall do so with fear and trembling. I know how sincere is your friendship, and I feel that no one would be more

mortified than you if it were to prove a failure. It has been written, I must say in justice to myself, under great disadvantages. A variety of circumstances prevented me from devoting a single day to a preliminary examination of authorities or to reading until the eighteenth of November. Besides, of about thirty gentlemen, to whom I have addressed letters asking their opinions, only seven returned answers, and these were so very brief and in such general terms as to be, with two or three exceptions, of no service to me whatever. I was desirous of sending in copies of those last referred to with my report, but I have explained why I could not with propriety do so. Dr. Jackson's letter was of the number, which I was anxious to have published. Should the survey be executed, he ought to be one of the geologists, and I apprehend no difficulty about the matter, if he should be disposed to take part in it. Whether the legislature will authorize the survey this winter is doubtful. Should such authority be given, I will inform you immediately.

Mr. Morgan, during his absence last fall, was put in nomination as a member of the legislature, and was elected in the City of New York. He and Mrs. Morgan have been with us a month. This arrangement, as you may suppose, is to us a very agreeable one. With my best regards to all your family, I am, my dear sir, Your sincere friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON, 14 November, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure to receive, half an hour ago, your favor of the 11th instant, having arrived here the evening before last with my family. I have often thought of writing to you during the last year; but my engagements in the Senate absolutely compelled me to relinquish my private correspondence, and I hoped, not without reason as your kind letter shows, that by addressing documents to you from time to time I should succeed in assuring you that you were ever in my thoughts.

Nothing would give me more pleasure than to visit with you the burial-place of our common ancestor when it shall have been reclaimed from the oblivion, into which it has been falling, by your liberality. I hope it may be in my power to do so before another year passes away. But I have so long looked forward to summer succeeding summer with the determination to revisit my native village and the scattered few in New England, whose ancestors are also mine, and have so often been disappointed, that I no longer venture to indulge any confident hope of realizing my wishes. Still, the opportunity may be presented to me when least expected, and it

will be joyfully embraced. Notwithstanding my long absence from New England, my attachment to it, and my respect for its institutions and the character of its inhabitants, strengthen as I advance in years.

Your kind interest in all that concerns me induces me to give you some family details. Morgan and Baldwin, my two eldest boys, are in Columbia College. The former entered the Sophomore class, immediately took the head of it, and now maintains his place in the Junior. The second entered the Freshman, and has a highly respectable standing in the Sophomore. They are both boys of decided talent, good dispositions and unexceptionable habits. They live with Mr. Morgan, who has within the last six months become quite infirm, and will not probably remain more than a year or two longer among us.

My wife's health is not strong, and she has recently been threatened with a return of her former affection of the chest. We are trying to avert the danger, and I indulge a confident hope that we shall succeed. Should her health again become seriously disordered, I shall throw aside all public employment, and go again to the South of Europe. I say to *you* (what I beg you not to repeat) that the President tendered to me the Mission to London before it was offered to Mr. Bancroft; but I was induced by a variety of circumstances to decline it. As a mark of his confidence it was a proposition, which I could not but receive with gratification. The fact has been stated by some of the letter-writers; but it is in the nature of a rumor, so far as the public is concerned; and I desire that it should remain so. I mention it to you because I know everything that concerns the little boy, who lived with you thirty-four years ago on the south side of Cambridge Street, and crossed with you over to the corner of Staniford to take possession of the new house, is interesting.

My wife sends her kindest regards to you, and begs to be remembered to your family. I can hardly have the face to ask you to write to so poor a correspondent as myself; and yet I will hope that I may now and then hear from you. Any information in relation to yourself and my native New England will always be gratefully received by, my Dear Sir, your relative and sincere friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

WASHINGTON, 31 January, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR, — I believe it is a long time since I have written to you; but I am also sure you will attribute my silence to anything but forgetfulness of you. My time is very much engrossed by my public duties. Since I have been in the Senate, it seems to me there

has been a perpetual procession of very troublesome and exciting questions — first, the annexation of Texas, next the Oregon dispute, and now the most perplexing and unpleasant of all, the Mexican war. On the latter I have just made a speech,¹ of which I will send you a copy in a few days. By the bye, I sent you last winter a speech I made on the extension of slavery to new territory — another vexatious question, which I did not mention in my enumeration on the last page.

You sent me a long time ago the *Life of Jeremiah Smith*,² which I read with great pleasure. I was very much interested in the earlier details of his public life before the commencement of his judicial service. Indeed, I consider it altogether a very interesting biography — one a stranger to him may read with great gratification. To me it was particularly so because I had a most vivid recollection of him. If you will turn to page 252, you will see his return from Concord to Exeter and his reception at the latter place mentioned. I was then a member of the Academy and walked out in the road with a fellow-student to meet him. The rain poured down in torrents, and my companion carried the umbrella, which he managed so awkwardly that he was constantly knocking me on the head with the handle. We were walking just opposite the Governor, who was on horseback, when I received so hard a blow from my companion that I broke out into a very loud and vehement expression of my disapprobation. The Governor heard me, and turned directly round, fixing his sharp, sparkling eyes upon me. It was the first time I had ever encountered a Governor, face to face, and being conscious of my want of courtesy, I do not think I could have felt much worse if I had been shot. I have never forgotten that piercing glance to this day. Whether it was the recollection of this scene, which has interested me so much in the Judge's biography I will not say, but I have certainly read it with very great pleasure.

My wife, whose health is usually delicate, is now pretty well. She has a hereditary tendency to cough; but I think if she could go to a southern climate for two or three years, she might hope for a comfortable old age.

Morgan, my eldest son, is at the head of the Senior class at Columbia College and will graduate in July. He is a very fine boy, and I should be very glad to introduce him to you. Indeed, Heaven has blessed me in all my children. We have six, and they all seem healthy and good tempered, with intelligence enough for respectability, if not for eminence. My wife joins me in kindest remem-

¹ January 26, 1848. In Dix, *Speeches and Addresses*, I. 198.

² By John H. Morison, published in 1845.

brance to you and to all your family, and I am ever faithfully Your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

Mrs. Frederick C. Shattuck has presented to the Society the following letter written to her father, Henry Lee:

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTEAD TO HENRY LEE, JR.

NEW YORK, March 5th, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have seen your letter on West Point which is to be published in the *Nation* and take the liberty of sending for your perusal a letter on the general subject of military education which contains some important suggestions. I should have endeavored to write upon the general question which this letter raises if I had felt myself to be sufficiently well-informed on the subject. As I know that you have given it much study may I ask that you will take the duty of preparing one or two short leading articles for the *Nation* upon the subject of the education of competent officers for militia and volunteer service?

My crude notion of what should be done is this: that government should offer encouragement to the formation of a class of Polytechnic schools, the pupils of which or a portion of the pupils of which should receive a certain measure of military education. The pupils to receive the benefit of the national appropriation to be chosen by competitive examination — examination to be made by agents of the War Department, candidates for examination to be nominated [by] the States (through the Superintendent of Common Schools, I should hope), successful candidates to be considered as wards of the War Department, and subject to a system of inspection and surveillance of officers detached from the regular army for this purpose. These officers might be stationed at the schools as part of the faculty — individuals being shifted as at West Point, but the office permanent. The education offered should be less purely military than at West Point, so as to fit the young men to engage at once on graduating in the general industrial system of the country, as civil engineers, draughtsmen, architects, metallurgists, mining and mechanical engineers, etc., etc. The need of *well-prepared students* in all these callings is and always has been very great in the country. The existing schools for them, at Cambridge, New Haven, Troy, Princeton and elsewhere might at once be adopted as the nuclei of the system proposed — Congress endowing a company or battalion of scholarships in each — and if this suggestion were adopted, perhaps the

agricultural schools would form other nuclei. There is no need that the system should be uniform — only that the result in the certain measure of military education should be uniform or nearly so in all the schools.

There comes then a secondary yet very important and difficult question of the subsequent military duties and privileges which should belong to the graduates. Could a selection of volunteers from these Polytechnic schools be taken for further and more extended military instruction at West Point — West Point thus becoming a finishing school for regular officers?

My own judgment is that no obligation of service to government should rest upon the Polytechnic scholars after graduation but it should be left to their sense of honor and military and patriotic spirit to offer their services upon occasion.

There is also a question whether any obligation to make use of the services of these graduates in their militia system could be placed on the States, or whether their selection should be left to voluntary election.

There is still another question, whether a system of instruction or at least of inspection of militia forces by officers detached from the regular army might not be established with advantage? One grand result of such a system would be that officers of the regular army would no longer be isolated during their whole career from the people of the country, and be as incapable of commanding volunteer forces, or of entertaining the idea of making use of volunteer forces with any confidence, as most of the regular officers were at the outbreak of the rebellion.

In any system for the preliminary instruction of a body of young men in the duties of military officers, such as I have suggested, there should be some arrangement which would give them more experience of something like campaigning life than the present summer camp of West Point. The most important and the most difficult class of duties to be taught volunteer or militia officers are those commonly called in the army, *administrative* — which might be called “house-keeping” or parental. It was their ignorance of these and ignorance of their duty to acquire a knowledge of them which caused the uselessness and enormous extravagance which generally was remarked whenever militia forces were called into the field during the late war, more than ignorance of the more purely or technically military duties.

You will, I trust, excuse these hasty indications of the line in which my own reflections on the subject run, and of the points upon which light is needed by the public from those who have studied it more thoroughly. It is a matter of the greatest national importance,

and if it has the go-by now, we can hardly hope that it will ever again have proper consideration until at least we have gone through another period of war.

Of course it is not possible, nor would it be desirable in the present stage of the discussion to lay down a well defined plan in the *Nation* and adhere to it. The tone of the article should therefore be suggestive and speculative rather than positive, so as to turn public attention in a practical way to a matter needing grave consideration.

Very Truly and Respectfully Yours,

FRED. LAW OLSTEAD,
for the Editor of the *Nation*.

THE COLONIAL POST OFFICE.

From the George Peabody Wetmore Papers are taken the following notes of meetings of the American Post Office in 1774, probably the only portion of its records in existence:¹

At a Board, *Monday, 28th November, 1774.* *Present:* John Foxcroft, Hugh Finlay, Esquires.

R. N. C.²

A hint has been given to Mr. Foxcroft that a Shilling is demanded for the Postage of a Letter between Philadelphia and New York, whereas it should be but 10½. *Ordered,* That the Secretary do make enquiry at the Post Office and learn, how much is received at the Office for a single letter from Philadelphia, and how much the Runner demands for his trouble.

Ordered: that a Circular be written on the 5th of January, and sent that day to all the Deputies, to be very punctual in transmitting their Quarterly Accounts the very first post after the Quarter ends, and to remit the Balances due thereon, with Vouchers for all Monies paid; and that they transmit as soon as possible the names of all places of Note which lie nearer to their Office than to any other, to the end that a Table may be printed as a guide to Postmasters in making up their Mails. Mr. Dixon³ should be wrote to in a very particular pressing manner on this head, that he may send

¹ See also Finlay, *Journal*, 1867.

² Richard Nicholls Colden, Sup. 175, *infra*.

³ Probably John Dixon, printer of the *Virginia Gazette*, Williamsburg, Virginia. The printers of newspapers found it their interest to be postmasters, or connected with the post office.

the Accounts regularly from those who account to him, and should constantly inform the Secretary when the Riders are not punctual. And as it appears necessary that the business of the Secretary, and the business of the Comptroller be fixed, seeing that both Employments are held under One Commission — Let it be settled as follows:

The Comptroller's business is, and shall henceforth be until new Orders:

To keep regular Books of Account, and in them to enter punctually as soon as received the Sum due by every Deputy, as it shall appear by his accounts every Quarter, and to give him Credit for every remittance or payment as soon as received, that at one view the true state of every Deputy Account may at any time be seen by the Deputy Post Masters General, when they may chuse to examine the Books.

The Comptroller is without fail to write to every Deputy who shall be more than a Month after the Quarter ends, in sending his Accounts, and if he does not transmit them by return of the post after the demand made, he is to inform the D. Post Master General thereof.

And as soon after the 5th day of every April as possible, he is to make up from his Books a General Account in the form prescribed by the Post Master General, that the Deputies General may examine it by his Books and Vouchers, and transmit it to England with the Balance arising thereon, by the June Packet in every year, and the Comptroller is to take care to have all the Deputies Accounts in due time that he may be enabled to obey this Order punctually.

All the Accounts and Letters which he receives should be folded up, in one and the same length and breadth, and regularly endorsed and laid up in Alphabetical order — and every Letter which he writes to Deputies, or to other people on Office Business must be entered in a book kept for that purpose. He is by every Packet to provide a good Bill of Exchange on London, at 30 days sight, for £100. Sterling at least: that the Deputy General may remit it to the Receiver General in England.

The Secretary.

Is at all times to be ready to attend the Deputy Post Masters General on Office Business, and in particular to give due attendance at the Board every Monday, and every Thursday at 11 oClock in the forenoon.

He is to keep a fair Copy of the Minutes of the business transacted, or ordered to be transacted every Board day.

He is to lay before the Board all Letters he receives on Office business, and to keep these Letters in proper form, regularly folded up and indorsed. He is to enter in the Office Letter Book all Letters written by the Deputies General, or by their order.

He is to keep in proper order all Bonds given by Deputies, Riders, etc.

He is to supply all Deputies with proper Forms, and Official Papers, and he is to take care to have a sufficient quantity in his possession at all times.

Whenever an Order, entered in the Minute Book is fulfilled, he is to put the initials of his Name before it in the Margin, with the day of the Month, as this is done.

Ordered, that a brass Seal be cut for every Office.

That a Letter be wrote to Mr. Dixon of Williamsburg, desiring him to send by return of Post, an account of the departure of the Post for Hobs Hole from Williamsburg, and the time when he returns.

At a Board, *Thursday*, 1st December 1774. *Present*: John Foxcroft, Esquire.

Ordered, that a Letter be wrote to Mr. Child, Deputy at Falmouth, that no allowance can be made to him for franking, nor no office rent.

Also a Letter to Eleazer Russel that no allowance can be made for franking.

Also a Letter to Mr. Norice, Salem, with a Commission and Papers.

R. N. C. Also a Letter to B. Emerson, Newbury, that all persons delivering Letters into the Office are entitled to *1d* and that he is entitled to *1d* more for delivering them.

26 Dec'r.
R. N. C.

Also a Letter to Mr. Hubbard at Boston, That he is to bring Mumford under an Obligation to deliver the Mail at Boston by 12 oClock Saturday otherwise he must look out for another Rider, and tell him to be very careful at all times that the Riders depart from the Town the moment they get the mail, and that he should employ a runner to carry out Letters as at New York and Philadelphia.

Also a Letter to Mr. Vernon to know what a Boy can be engaged for to carry over the Mail to Towerhill twice a Week when a change of the route takes place.

That a Letter be written to Mr. Sands of Tower Hill, with a commission and papers.

That a Letter be written to Mr. Miller of New London, to order Hurd the Rider and his associate, Peet, to cross the Connecticut above Saybrook when there's floating Ice or any impediment at the ordinary ferry.

That a Letter be written to the Deputy at Fairfield to make particular enquiry of Mr. Burr, the High Sheriff, about overcharges in the Postages of Letters which he has been obliged to pay to the Riders before they would deliver the Letters.

26 Dec'r.

That a Letter be written to Mr. Bodoin to care of Mr. Dixon, That the Deputies General cannot see a necessity for employing a Rider from Philadelphia to Norfolk by the Eastern shore; therefore that we shall not enter on the subject of his Ferry boat for carrying the Mails across Chesapeak Bay.

That a Letter be written to Mr. Ramsay to set forth in a clear Manner the necessity of two posts a week between Philadelphia and Alexandria if he can, that another may be established if it will now go nigh to defray the expence of an additional rider.

That a Letter be written to Thomas Foxcroft, Esqr., to enquire into a Complaint made of the Rider between Philadelphia and Annapolis — he keeps his horse on the wrong side of Susquehanna ferry which occasions delays; to have this explained.

Ordered, That an advertisement be published in all the New York papers immediately and be continued four Weeks or longer if necessary, and also in the Philadelphia and Boston papers — That from the 14th of this month there will be two Posts Weekly for Canada by way of Albany, one as usual riding on the East side

of Hudsons River on Wensday, when the Mail will be made up at Eleven oClock; and the other on Saturday riding on the West side of the River, the Mail closed at 9 oClock at night. The first returns to New York with a Canada Mail on Tuesday Evening at 4 oClock, and the Second on Saturday midday.

R. N. C.

Ordered, that a small Book be provided by the Secretary in which he is to enter all Commissions granted to Deputies, and he is to mark them sent as in Margin; and when a Commission is sent he is to give information thereof immediately to the Comptroller for his guidance in opening an Account for him, and when any Deputy is removed or resigns the Secretary is also to advise the Comptroller thereof.

At a Board on *Monday*, the 5th December, 1774. *Present*: John Foxcroft, Hugh Finlay, Esquires.

R. N. C.

Ordered That the Secretary do give in to the Deputy Post Master here and his Clerks a very strict charge against suffering any person or persons whatsoever, who have not taken the Oaths of Post office from entering the Post office on any pretence whatsoever.

That all Post Riders be furnished with a set of Instructions according to the *Form* which Form may be varied according to circumstances in the Ride.

That the Secretary give directions to the Deputies of New York and Philadelphia that in time to come all Letters for Burlington be sent in the Bristol Bag, the Office at Burlington being drop'd on account of the Governor of the Jerseys being removed from thence to Amboy.

That by every Packet an account of appointments of Deputy Post Masters, since the Last Packet be made out by the Secretary ready to be transmitted home by the Deputies General, and also an Account of all dismissions and resignations with Reasons assigned as is directed by the Instructions, dated 2d March, 1774. This may be taken from the Commission Book.

R. N. C.

That the Deputies of every place where a News Paper is published, be ordered to transmit the Papers by every Ship from their parts under a Cover directed to Anthony Todd, Esquire, Secretary at the General Post Office, London.

That the Comptroller send Comptrollers Bill to Mr. Russel.

At a Board on *Thursday*, December 8th, 1774. *Present:* John Foxcroft, Esqr.

R. N. C.
Dec'r. 9.

The Secretary read a Letter received by yesterdays Post from Thomas Foxcroft, Esqr., relating to Burrows the old Rider. *Ordered*, that a Letter be written to Mr. Foxcroft to reinstate Burrows on Mr. Kirkbridies becoming his Security for the faithful discharge of his Duty.

R. N. C.
Dec'r. 12th.

The Secretary also read a Letter from Mr. Carter of Providence concerning the change of the Route from Towerhill to Greenwich. *Ordered*, the Secretary to acquaint Mr. Carter¹ that some time before the receipt of his Letter the Deputy Post-Master General had directed Mr. Vernon of Newport to engage a Bye Rider between New Port and Towerhill to prevent the Delays at present complained of, and that Mr. Carter immediately make out and transmit hither without delay his Accounts to the 5th of October last, together with the Balance due, otherwise another person will be appointed to take charge of the Office at Providence.

At a Board on *Monday*, the 12th of December, 1774. *Present:* John Foxcroft, Esquire.

The Board met this Day but no business was transacted on account of the melancholy situation of Mr. Colden, Secretary and Comptroller, who lay at the Point of Death.

At a Board on *Thursday*, 15th December, 1774. *Present:* John Foxcroft, Esqr.

The Board being informed by Mr. Richard N. Colden of the decease of his Father, Alexander Colden,² Esquire, late Secretary and Comptroller, who died on the 12th Instant, have appointed Mr. Richard Nicholls Colden their Secretary and Comptroller in the Room of his Father deceased 'till further Orders are received from

¹ John Carter, printer of the *Providence Gazette*.

² Son of Cadwallader Colden.

His Majesty's Post Master General. Therefore
Ordered, that Mr. Colden transact the Business of
Secretary and Comptroller 'till further Orders.

Remarks were made during the meeting by Messrs. WASH-
BURN, NORCROSS, GREEN, and HART.

